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FRIENDLY LETTERS

TO

A UNIVERSALIST,

ON DIVINE

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? — *Paul.*

BY BERNARD WHITMAN.

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INTRODUCTORY EPISTLE TO THE READER.

GENTLE READER,

Before you enter upon the perusal of the following pages, you will doubtless wish to ask a few questions. Please to propose such as you think proper and I will return honest and explicit answers.

"In what sense do you use the term *universalist*?" I use it to denote an individual, who believes that a perfect retribution takes place in this world; who denies all future rewards and punishments for the deeds done in the body; who contends that all will be happy like the angels in heaven the moment they enter the next conscious existence, and who declares that no distinctions will exist among mankind beyond the grave.

"What name do you give to the person who believes that all future punishment will terminate in the reformation and consequent happiness of mankind?" I call him a *restorationist*. Many of this faith have already

separated from the universalists and organized themselves into a distinct denomination; while others of the same sentiments still remain in the sect of universalists. But this is no reason for withholding from them their rightful name, as you learn from the following official declaration. "It is not necessary that restorationists should use this phrase, '*ultra*,' to distinguish themselves from universalists; for the appellations *universalist* and *restorationist* are sufficient distinctions." Very well. I bow submissively to this authority; and will never intentionally call a universalist an *ultra*, or a restorationist a *universalist*. And I will do all in my power to have this important distinction observed. Trumpet, vol. xiv. p. 103.

"Have you attacked the distinguishing doctrine of the restorationist?" I have not. My main object is to establish the certainty of a future righteous retribution. I think there is little or nothing in the following letters to which any of the number will object, whether they are now connected with unitarians, universalists, baptists, calvinists, methodists or episcopalians. And I know not why any believers in future retribution should dislike my work, since I have not discussed the question of the duration of future punishment.

"Do you assert that universalists believe in a perfect earthly retribution?" I do. Read the following official declarations. "The fundamental principle of universalism is this, that all men shall be rewarded accord-

ing to their works; that the punishment of sin is *not* delayed until the future existence, but that it is swift, sure and inevitable. In regard to retribution, this is the doctrine of *universalists.*" "It is a sentiment which *distinguishes us* from *all* our religious opponents, that *this life is a state of retribution* as well as of trial or probation; that *here* virtue receives an *ample* reward of happiness, and that here sin meets a *competent* punishment of misery." "There is in the moral government of our heavenly Father, an established administration, which secures to those who love and obey him a *present complete* reward; and one which delays not to give unto the wicked the reward of his hands. To deny this, however popular the contrary opinion may be, is a *moral delirium*, a *fatal insanity*, which not only exposes us to danger, but absolutely plunges us into trouble." Trumpet, vol. xiii. p. 38. Cobb's Sermon in Ch. In. 1829. Ballou's Select Sermons, p. 87.

"Do you assert that universalists believe no one will be rewarded hereafter for the goodness here acquired?" I do. Read the following official declaration. "By this rational interpretation, we avoid the *heathen* notion of recompensing men in one state of being for the conduct they do in another. Of all reveries this is the wildest. Jesus no where taught that doctrine." Trumpet, vol. xii. p. 134.

"Do you assert that universalists believe no one will *be punished hereafter for* the sins of this life?" I do.

Read the following official declarations. "The *universalist* does not indeed believe in punishment after death for the sins of this life. *Our* doctrine is and has been, that men will not be punished in the future world for the sins of this life." "*Universalists* do maintain that punishment in the future state is not threatened in the divine word." Trumpet, vol. xiii. p. 42. Vol. xii. pp. 158, 190.

"Do you assert that universalists believe all will be made happy in heaven the moment they enter upon the next conscious existence?" I do. Read the following official declaration. "*Universalists now* know of no condition for man beyond the grave but that in which he is *as the angels* of God *in heaven*. Let the opponents then refute, if they can, the views of *universalists* of the *present day*." Trumpet, vol. xii. p. 158.

"Do you assert that universalists believe there will be no distinctions among men in a future life?" I do. Read the following explicit declaration. "The bible does not support the doctrine of distinctions among mankind, either in the grave or *beyond it*." Trumpet, vol. xiii. p. 38.

"Will universalists be satisfied with having your attack confined to these opinions?" Certainly. Read the following official direction. "When you attack the doctrine of *universalists*, we beseech you to take hold of the *real* doctrine as it is believed *now* and defended *now*. Refute Origen, if you can; and Relly and Winchester *if* you can; but do not suppose you have refuted

us, because you have discovered discrepancies in the systems of early universalists. Neither content yourselves with combating what a private individual, here and there, of the present day believes; but take the sentiment of the *order*, read the *books of its principal authors*, and seize the principal arguments, and overturn them if you can." Trumpet, vol. xi. p. 14.

"Who are considered the principal authors among the universalists?" This question was once asked of an official organ by an orthodox clergyman, so that he might become acquainted with the "*present prevailing system of universalism;*" and what answer was returned? Read the following statement. "I took a pen and ink and wrote, Ballou on Atonement, Ballou's Notes on the Parables, Ballou's Lectures, Kneeland's Lectures, Balfour's Enquiries, and all the volumes of the Universalist Magazine or Trumpet." Trumpet, vol. xi. p. 166.

"Will not universalists consider your attack upon their system unprovoked?" No. Read the following false and official statement. "There has been a *constant* effort, for a *year* or *two*, on the part of Mr. Whitman to torture and caricature the views of universalists in regard to the future state. Is he not willing they should abide by the word of God? Does he wish them to be wise above what is written? *If they have misunderstood any part of God's revealed truth, we ask, in the name of justice, why he does not endeavor* as a friend to *convince them of their error?* He has always had oppor-

tunities, but has never attempted it. The gauntlet was fairly thrown down to him a few months since by Rev. Mr. Paige, of Cambridgeport; but with the *most frivolous pretences*, and *palpable evasions*, he *shrunk* away from the *controversy, knowing too well the power of his antagonist's mind and arguments to judge it safe to enter the lists.*" Trumpet, vol. xiv. p. 154.

And now, gentle reader, let me conclude with a few words of explanation. My views on some minor points may be misunderstood, because I have not given them a full statement and ample discussion. An enemy can pervert my meaning in several places. I have addressed these communications to an *honest* man, and he will endeavor to ascertain what I mean in every place, and not what he can make my language teach. I have taken no great pains to guard against perversions, and I know that sentences may be taken from their connexion and made to present apparent inconsistencies. Many of my arguments are greatly contracted for want of room. The whole branch of evidence in proof of my definition of *gehenna* from the christian fathers is necessarily omitted. About one hundred and fifty years after Christ Justin Martyr comments on a passage of our Savior in which he cautions his disciples to fear God. As he is addressing heathen converts he has to explain the word used in the text quoted. These are his words. "*Gehenna is* the place where those are to be punished who *have led unrighteous* lives, and disbelieved what God

declared by Christ." Now such testimony when added to what I have advanced must possess no small value. So also the evidence from Josephus in relation to the use of *hades* in his day has been neglected. Speaking of the belief of the sadducees he uses this language. "The sadducees take away the belief of the duration of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in *hades*."

Owing to my distance from the press and my want of care in correcting the proof sheets, a few trifling mistakes appear in the text, which I must request you to correct, some of the most important of which I will mention.

Errata.—Page 6, add after tenth line, "*Provided all other members of the human family do the same, and God orders all events favorably.*" Page 7, *unreasonably* for unseasonably. Page 26, *acquitable* for equitable. Page 37, strike out *not* in first line. Page 172, add *Jonathan* between Targum and Ben Uzziel.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your candid and patient attention is invited to a friendly discussion of the important question of divine rewards and punishments. You profess to be a universalist of the modern school. You believe that a perfect retribution takes place in this world. You believe that the righteous are always and equitably and fully rewarded by their righteousness in this mortal life. You believe that the wicked are always and equitably and fully punished by their wickedness, in their present existence. Not only so. You also believe that there will be no future retribution for the deeds done in the body. You believe that the righteous will not be rewarded hereafter by the righteousnes which they have here acquired. You believe that the wicked will not be punished hereafter by the wickedness which they have here committed. In short you believe that the future condition of mankind will not be affected by the characters which they have here formed. You believe that all rational beings will be made pure and holy and happy when they enter on the next conscious existence. You assure me that *these two articles of your belief constitute the dis-*

tinguishing features of modern, American universalism. And you request me to express my honest convictions on this controverted subject.

Now, my dear Sir, I firmly believe that your system of universalism has no foundation in fact or revelation. I will therefore frankly give you some of the reasons for my belief. In the following pages I will endeavor to illustrate the nature of temporal rewards and punishments; to prove that no perfect retribution takes place in this world; to explain the meaning of christian salvation; to produce some of the arguments from common sense and scripture in proof of a future righteous retribution; to refute the principal objections which your writers have made to this doctrine; to answer the arguments which they have adduced in support of your system; to state my objections to modern, American universalism, and to conclude with some remarks on the natural tendency of the different views of divine retribution. I shall aim to manifest my friendship by using great plainness of speech, and by declaring explicitly my opinions and impressions on the various questions that may arise. I know *you* will give my Letters a fair and thorough examination. I believe you will cheerfully renounce your present sentiments on the points at issue if I should prove them to be erroneous. I think you will gladly embrace whatever truth may be elicited and established by my remarks. And I may reasonably expect, that all the members of your denomination who think and judge for themselves, will peruse my observations with candor and attention, since some of your preachers have repeatedly called upon me to engage in this discussion.

In the first place, you will naturally inquire what I understand by divine rewards and punishments? In *answer to* this question I will appeal directly to your

own experience and observation. I trust you have an undoubting faith in the infinite perfections of One universal Father. Has not this impartial Parent given you existence? Has he not created you for happiness? Has he not endowed you with an animal, an intellectual, a moral nature, so that you may answer the design of your creation? Has he not admirably adapted all your appetites, passions, propensities, affections, corporeal and mental and religious capacities for the accomplishment of this glorious purpose? Has he not implanted in your bosom an unconquerable desire for higher degrees of enjoyment? Has he not mercifully provided all the necessary means for its gratification? Does he not wish you to be continually happy? And does he not do every thing which is consistent with your moral freedom to promote your happiness? Surely an affirmative answer must be returned to these several inquiries.

How then can you secure happiness and avoid misery? In but one way. You must obey the laws of your nature. But whence arise these laws? Where are they recorded? How can we ascertain their adaptation? What is their extent? They originated with your heavenly Father when he created man in his own image. They are enstamped on your very constitution. They are indicated in the works of nature. They are plainly revealed in the gospel. They are known by experience to be adapted to your necessities. They extend to every principle of humanity; to all the relations you sustain towards your fellow men and your allwise Creator and benefactor. Hence there is a right course in every thing, and a wrong course in every thing. The right consists in thinking, feeling, believing, conversing, and acting in all things and at all times as your Maker designed you should think, feel, believe, converse and act under the *existing circumstances*. The wrong consists

either in omitting these particulars, or in pursuing a different course in these several respects from what you were made to pursue. When you follow the right you obey in a greater or less degree the laws of your nature, and this obedience is generally attended or followed with more or less happiness. When you adhere to the wrong you disobey in a greater or less degree the laws of your nature, and this disobedience is generally attended or followed with more or less misery.

Now, my dear Sir, you know that this happiness is the natural consequence of your obedience. This happiness then is the natural retribution or the paying you for your righteousness. And this natural consequence, this natural retribution, I call the divine reward of your obedience to the laws of your nature. You also perceive that this misery is the natural consequence of your disobedience. This misery then is the natural retribution or the paying you for your wickedness. And this natural consequence, this natural retribution, I call the divine punishment of your disregard of the laws of your constitution. You must likewise observe that religion consists in conforming to the rule of right in all things and at all times; and that irreligion consists either in neglecting the right or in pursuing the wrong. The sole design of religion then is to enable you to receive happiness and avoid misery. To be a christian is to obey the laws of your nature, and happiness is the reward of your obedience. To be a sinner is to disregard these laws, and misery is the punishment of your transgression. Consequently we cannot receive the happiness for which we were created without obedience to the divine laws.

But perhaps you will inquire, why I call these *rewards* and punishments divine? Does our heavenly *Father interpose* to furnish happiness when we obey his

laws and misery when we disobey them? Not directly, but through second causes. You know that he is the author of your constitution. You know that he has made you for holiness, and that all sin is directly contrary to your very nature. You know that you are a free agent and have power to choose and practise righteousness, and also to discover and avoid wickedness. You know that the righteous course is generally attended or followed with happiness, and the wicked course as generally attended or followed with misery. And you know that all this is the arrangement of divine providence. Consequently the happiness you enjoy when you have done righteously is as much divine as though the Deity had interposed directly to confer this reward for your obedience. And the misery you suffer when you have done wickedly is as much divine as though your Father had interfered directly to inflict this punishment for your transgression. Besides these rewards and punishments through second causes, the Almighty has occasionally interfered in a miraculous manner to punish the guilty and reward the innocent; and surely all such retributions are entitled to the name divine. I think you must understand what I mean by divine rewards and punishments. The natural or miraculous consequences of obedience to the laws of God I call divine rewards. The natural or miraculous consequences of transgression I call divine punishments. When these consequences are confined to this world I call them a temporal retribution; and when they extend beyond the grave I call them a future retribution. I conclude therefore that no candid and intelligent reader can mistake my meaning of the various phrases used in the present discussion.

Let me now endeavor to illustrate the nature of *temporal rewards and punishments.*

I. I will first direct your attention to the natural rewards of obedience, and to the natural punishments of transgression. I will arrange my remarks according to the different relations we sustain, and the corresponding duties we are under obligation to perform.

1. The duties which you owe to yourself are the first in order. You were made to enjoy uninterrupted happiness. You can secure this invaluable boon by conforming to whatever is right in every particular, and in avoiding whatever is wrong at all times and under all circumstances. It becomes your highest interest then to practise righteousness and shun iniquity, so that you may obtain the enjoyment for which you were created, and glorify your heavenly Father by living in all instances as he intended. Let me now give you a few illustrations of these remarks.

In the first place, you were made to enjoy uninterrupted health. If your parents and ancestors have obeyed the laws of their physical nature, you have doubtless inherited a perfect animal constitution, and are therefore prepared to enjoy more or less of the rewards of their obedience, and to transmit them to posterity. If they have disobeyed these laws, you have probably inherited an imperfect constitution, and must consequently suffer more or less of the punishments of their transgression, and transmit them much beyond the third and fourth generation. Whoever knows any thing of human nature must know that the iniquities of the fathers are visited upon their children. It will be sufficient in this place to mention the predisposition to the gout, scrofula, consumption and insanity. Now if you scrupulously obey the laws of your Maker which relate to your animal nature, you receive uninterrupted health; and the natural consequence of health is a high degree *of satisfaction* and a preparation for all the other rational

enjoyments of life. If you disobey these laws you suffer the penalty; and the natural consequence of your transgression will consist in a greater or less degree of pain and sickness, and an unfitness for participation in the various blessings of life. Suppose then your constitution is perfect, and you endeavor to render the required obedience. You eat the right kind of food, at proper times and in suitable quantities. You will drink wholesome liquids, in moderate portions and at appointed seasons. You will take sufficient exercise, in various ways and at convenient hours. You will sleep no more nor less than nature requires. You will always regulate your dress according to the present temperature. You will avoid all improper exposure to heat or cold, to moisture or dryness, to impure air or contagious disease. You will shun every thing which can impart disease or give physical suffering. You will practise all things which were designed to increase your corporeal enjoyments, and preserve your animal functions in full vigor and strength. And what will be the natural consequence of this obedience to the laws of your constitution? Health, which is itself a source of happiness and a necessary qualification for enjoying the pleasures which arise from all other sources. This health then I pronounce the divine reward of your obedience.

Now suppose you should pay no particular regard to the laws of your physical being. You would eat unhealthy food, at improper times, and in quantities either too great or too small. You would drink injurious liquids, in excessive or scanty portions, and at periods the most irregular and dangerous. You would be unduly and unreasonably exposed to all the varieties of heat and cold, to moisture and dryness, and also to impure atmosphere and pestilential vapors. Your sleep

and exercise would be neither regular nor productive of beneficial results. In short you would disregard all the known and necessary laws of health. And what would be the consequence of this disobedience? More or less pain and disease and sickness. You would be unqualified in a greater or less degree for the performance of your incumbent duties, and for rational enjoyment. Perhaps death itself would come suddenly and perhaps you would linger many years in wretchedness. All this suffering and loss I consider to be the divine punishment of your transgression. Now I believe it is as much a part of religion to obey these laws of your physical nature, as any other of your Father's requisitions. You must be convinced from your own experience and observation that the penalties of disobedience are severe and almost certain to be inflicted. I imagine there is more suffering from this one source of sinfulness than from the transgression of many other commands. And it is not merely the body that experiences the sad consequences of the wickedness. The mind very frequently feels itself guilty; the man is conscious of having knowingly done wrong; he sensibly realizes that he has unfitted himself for the performance of his necessary duties, and his compunctions of conscience are most poignant. And must not this consequence extend to the next existence? Although physical suffering may cease with the dissolution of the body, yet I can see no reason why the soul, which in many cases has been the sinner, which has suffered severely even here for its transgressions, must not hereafter lament its disobedience of the divine laws. This surely would be nothing more nor less than the natural consequence of its disregard of the commands of heaven. And must not he who *has so* preserved his health as to make great advances *in knowledge* and goodness feel rewarded by the con-

sciousness of having done righteously and by the possession of high degrees of wisdom and holiness? Without pressing this question, I have said sufficient to illustrate one particular of temporal rewards and punishments.

In the second place, you were made to derive happiness from the proper gratification of your appetites. They are given you for this purpose in connexion with other important uses. You may secure this reward by observing rigidly the laws which your Creator has ordained for their regulation. Suppose then you should render perfect obedience. You would be temperate in the use of all nourishing food and drinks. You would abstain wholly from whatever is injurious or unhealthy. And what would be the natural consequence? You would possess a pure and delicate taste, and a keen and well regulated appetite. Your meals would afford you a high degree of pleasure. Their immediate and remote effects on your system would be pleasing and beneficial. Your animal nature would be nourished and invigorated. You would thus be qualified for intellectual and moral advancement. All this enjoyment and preparation for duty I pronounce the divine reward of your obedience.

Now suppose you should disregard the laws of temperance. Suppose you should become an intemperate drinker of ardent spirits. You would experience much pain and sickness. Your health would be injured and your constitution undermined. Your temper would become fretful and your mental powers would be enervated. Your moral feelings would be blunted and brutified, and your social affections wasted and destroyed. Your property would be dissipated, your family and friends disgraced, and your neighbors injured. You would be unfitted for the performance of your obligatory duties. You would not answer the design of your creation. *Your enjoyments* would be diminished and your

misery increased in various ways. All this and much more would be the natural consequence of your intemperance. This suffering and degradation I consider the divine punishment for your disobedience. Now it is as much a part of duty to govern your appetites as to observe any other of the divine laws. Intemperance in both eating and drinking, but particularly in eating, is a crying sin of our land. Thousands and tens of thousands of immortal beings are annually hastened to the grave by an excessive gratification of the appetites. And it is not the physical nature alone which suffers from this wickedness. By no means. Let a man become intoxicated by accident and the natural consequences of drunkenness on his body cannot be avoided. But let him knowingly indulge to excess a second time, and he is so constituted that he will experience the most severe compunctions of conscience. Almost every confirmed drunkard in moments of soberness suffers the most excruciating mental agony. And what can prevent these consequences from extending to the next existence ? It is the free soul which sins. And can the mind of man when in a sound state ever view intemperance with complacency ? Can a person find satisfaction in meditating upon the injury which he inflicted upon himself, his friends and society ? Can the recollection of a wasted and degraded life, of duties neglected and sins committed, afford comfort to a religious mind ? Surely not. Then how can the drunkard escape from himself, from a remembrance of his aggravated wickedness, from the horror and remorse of a guilty and self-condemned conscience ? On the contrary, must not the man who has qualified himself by strict temperance for a christian life ever rejoice in his successful resistance to temptation, *and in his* mental and moral attainments. I see not how *these natural* consequences can possibly be avoided. I

have however said sufficient to illustrate another instance of temporal rewards and punishments.

In the third place, your mind was made to be educated. You may expand its powers almost indefinitely by discipline. You may acquire an unlimited degree of useful knowledge by industry and application. You may qualify yourself by education for the most exquisite intellectual enjoyment and the most distinguished usefulness. If then you obey the laws which regulate your mental operations you will find the greatest satisfaction in your obedience. The whole process of culture will be attended with a high degree of pleasure. Your increasing information will afford you great delight. And your ability to enjoy, and to communicate, and to benefit, will be the natural consequence of your application. This happiness and capacity for felicity, and mental and moral power, I call the divine reward of your obedience.

Now suppose you should altogether disregard the laws of your mind. You would spend no time in reading or meditation. You would acquire very little valuable instruction. You would be unfitted for many of the important duties of life. You would live and die in ignorance. And what would be the natural consequence of this course of transgression? You would lose all the pleasures which arise from mental cultivation, from valuable information, from intellectual power. And you would suffer many inconveniences and vexations for want of more education. And if you had wilfully abused your privileges, and wasted your time, and neglected the cultivation of your talents, you would experience many hours of self-condemnation and wretchedness. All this suffering, incapacity and loss of the purest enjoyments, I should consider the divine punishment of your disobedience. Now it is as much a part of christian duty to *obey the laws which* relate to the improvement of the

mind as it is to observe any of the other precepts of the gospel. Almost infinite evils arise from this transgression. And what can prevent these consequences from extending to another world? You have seen the man whose youth was spent in idleness and dissipation, lamenting most bitterly his iniquity, and suffering most severely for his negligence and wickedness. And when he enters a spiritual life beyond the grave can he look with approbation on what he now condemns? Must he not feel more sensibly his ingratitude and sinfulness? Must not his wilful ignorance, which unfits him in some degree for the most refined pleasures of the soul on earth, equally disqualify him for the same enjoyments in heaven? On the contrary must not the individual who has done most for his own mental and moral advancement be best prepared for the enjoyment of mental and moral happiness? But on this ground, you will ask what must be the future conditions of the millions who die in utter ignorance. Look among savage nations, and although their ignorance is unavoidable, you perceive that they suffer the natural consequences of their disobedience to the laws of their intellectual nature. You notice the great enjoyments of which they are deprived, and the great wretchedness which they suffer, on account of this transgression. As their ignorance is not wilful but necessary they feel no compunctions of conscience; and surely they can feel none on this account when admitted to a brighter existence. And although they are unfitted for the higher degrees of celestial enjoyments, still is it not in the power of the universal Father to place them in the most favorable situations for improvement, so as eventually to equalize their advantages with those of the rest of mankind? If he can make such distinctions in *this respect* as now exist on earth, he surely can do the *same thing* in another world. And will not this course

be necessary to establish his impartial and paternal character? I can pursue this topic no farther at present. Thus I have given you three illustrations of the duties which you owe to yourself. Several more might be sketched did my limits permit. These however are sufficient to convince you that obedience to the laws of your nature is generally attended or followed with more or less happiness; and that disobedience is usually attended or followed with more or less misery. Consequently you see the necessity of living righteously in every particular if you would secure the divine reward and avoid the divine punishment; and I believe you will find no way in which the natural consequences of your conduct can be prevented from attending you into another existence.

2. The duties which you owe your fellow men come next in order. You were made to love your brethren as yourself. You were created to do unto them in all things and at all times as you would have them do unto you. So far as you obey these laws of your nature, so far you secure the reward of your obedience. So far as you neglect or transgress these laws, so far you incur blame and punishment. Unless your obedience be perfect your happiness will be imperfect. It is your highest interest therefore to observe these laws, so as to secure the enjoyment for which you were created, promote the welfare of your equal fellows in which your own is more or less involved, and glorify your Father in heaven by living in these several particulars as he intended. Let me give you a few illustrations of these observations.

In the first place you were made to be honest in your dealings with your fellow men. You are surrounded with temptations to cheat and defraud. You have in your own mind motives to resistance sufficiently powerful. *You have merely to* place yourself in the situation

of your neighbor and the victory is gained. Now would you desire your brother to deceive you in a bargain? Would you have him make you believe an article is of superior quality when he knows it is wholly worthless? Should you wish him to induce you to pay much more than the real value of the purchase? Are you willing he should defraud you in any manner whatever or to any amount however small? Certainly not. If then you are guilty of any of those sins which you would unhesitatingly condemn in him, do you not knowingly violate the law of benevolence? And what follows? You feel a degree of oppression at your heart. Your mind reproaches you for having wilfully done wrong. Your iniquity is sooner or later discovered. You resolve upon restoring some of your ill-gotten gains. You have not moral courage to carry your resolutions into execution. You despise yourself, and you fear many others have the same feelings towards you. You cannot look to heaven for a blessing upon such unhallowed means of obtaining property. Your character suffers in the estimation of your acquaintances. Little or no confidence is reposed in your integrity. You know very few if any real friends. In hours of reflection or danger or sickness, your dishonest dealings cause you the most painful reflections and the most fearful forebodings. All this and much more is the natural consequence of your iniquity; and all this I pronounce the divine punishment of your disobedience.

Now suppose you should be perfectly honest in all your transactions with your fellow men. Suppose you should do unto them in all your dealings as you would have them do unto you. You would speak the truth, and the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, on every occasion. And what would follow? You would feel a high degree of satisfaction in the consciousness of al-

ways doing right. You would experience an elevation of spirits too little known among men of business. You would daily seek the blessing of an omniscient Father on your labors, to whom you would appeal in proof of the sincerity of your intentions. You would look your customers in the face with an undaunted eye and an unblushing countenance. Your character would be respected by all, even the intriguing and deceitful. Unlimited confidence would be reposed in your word. Your business would be increased. And in times of self-examination, or affliction, or approaching dissolution, you would review your truly christian course with approbation. You would experience the smiles of an enlightened conscience. All this and much more is the natural consequence of your honesty; and all this I pronounce the divine reward of your obedience. And what can prevent these consequences from extending to another existence? Whatever the gospel authorizes you to regard with satisfaction in the hour of death must increase your enjoyment in a purer and more spiritual region. And if you condemn yourself for your dishonest and fraudulent practices when standing on the brink of the grave, if you then suffer the most exquisite torments on account of your unjust and sinful dealings, what is to change your views and feelings on your entrance into a state in which wickedness will appear in its true deformity? Can you then look with approbation on the many instances in which you deceived and injured your brethren? Will it give you happiness to remember how great riches you acquired by falsehood? I see no way in which you can escape these natural consequences of your obedience or transgression.

In the second place, you were made to obtain your living by some useful occupation. You may employ your body or your mind, or both in connexion. The

philosopher in his study has done more for the advancement of the human family than thousands who have devoted themselves to manual employments. In what condition would the world have been, had not the inventions of printing, the mariner's compass, the machinery for cotton and woolen fabrics, and a thousand others, never been known? All useful employments are equally honorable, and the day laborer is as much entitled to respect for his honest industry as the overseer of the most complicated mechanism on earth. Suppose then you follow agriculture, the most ancient occupation of man, and without which all others must terminate. You secure health and competence. You escape a thousand temptations to which others are exposed. Many occurrences naturally lead your thoughts up through nature to the supreme ruler of the universe. You are not dependent on your fellow men for your daily bread. Circumstances conspire to produce contentment, domestic enjoyment, and much mental and moral improvement. Now the result of all these things is rational happiness. This then I pronounce the divine reward of your obedience.

But suppose you should pursue a different course. Suppose you should endeavor to gain a subsistence by the useless and pernicious vice of gambling. While engaged in this business you do nothing to increase provision, clothing, or improvement in knowledge or goodness. On the contrary you aim to obtain the property of your neighbor without returning him any equivalent, or without his giving it to you as a present; and consequently what you receive is fraudulently acquired. You are taken from your family at unseasonable hours, and often return with a peevish and crabbed disposition. You set an example which you dare not let your children observe or imitate. You are tempted to indulge in

lying, profanity, obscenity and excessive drinking. Your character is ruined in the estimation of all wise and christian persons. You are instrumental in seducing the promising youth from the paths of virtue and honest industry. You are accessary to the destruction of his moral principles, his brightest prospects for this world, and his best hopes for another. With all this accumulated load of guilt on your head, how can you enjoy a moment's real happiness? It is impossible. You cannot ask the blessing of your Father upon your undertaking. In your own soul you know it is a wicked and ruinous occupation. You can never look back with satisfaction either upon your gains or losses. You can never think of your habits and practices without severe compunctions of conscience. You fear sickness and death and futurity. All this is the natural consequence of your iniquity; the divine punishment for your disobedience of the laws of your Creator. And can these consequences cease with the death of the body? Will you take delight in heaven in contemplating your wretched and depraved existence on earth? Will not the industrious and virtuous laborer who has done good to others find himself qualified for pure and holy pleasures? I put these questions to your common sense.

3. In the third place, you were made to love your neighbor as you love yourself. If this affection exists in your bosom it will manifest itself in your feelings, dispositions, conversation and conduct. How then would you discover your friendship for yourself? Would you endeavor to waste your property, injure your influence, and destroy your character? These are acts of the insane and wicked who hate their own existence. Suppose then you disregard this law of your nature; suppose you really hate your brother; the fruits of your enmity will appear in your behaviour. You will

feel uneasy and restless whenever his name passes through your memory. You will be watching for opportunities to diminish his wealth or popularity or respect. You will throw out hints, insinuations and even direct charges respecting his purity or innocence or honesty or integrity. You will rejoice to hear of his misfortunes and his ill success in the business of life. In short your hatred will fill your bosom with more or less wretchedness. And besides this your fellow men will lose their respect for your character. They will receive your statements with caution. They will feel less kindly towards you, and be less ready to aid you in even your good undertakings. They will pity and in some instances despise you. All this and much more is the natural consequence of your wickedness; and all this I consider the divine punishment of your disobedience.

Now suppose you should strictly observe this divine command. You would regard your neighbor as a child of your Father; equally dear by nature to your common parent, and entitled to equal rights and privileges and hopes. You would feel that your own happiness depended in no small degree on his mental, moral and temporal prosperity. You would accordingly regard his feelings, his property, his character, as sacred as your own. You would endeavor in every possible way to advance his best welfare. And what would follow? You would feel at ease in your own mind. You would derive improvement and enjoyment from your friendship. You would realize that you had one on whom you could depend in every situation. You would view your intercourse towards him with satisfaction. All this and much more would be the natural consequence of your affection; the divine reward of your obedience. And must not these consequences extend beyond the grave? Will

you not renew your intimacy with the virtuous brother? Will not a recollection of your past kindness and love increase your celestial joys? Will you not be better prepared for the felicity of a heavenly existence? On the contrary, can you ever look with approbation upon your hatred and enmities? Will it afford you pleasure to remember your unchristian feelings and your infernal dispositions? I see no way in which you can ever become so perfect as not to loathe all ill will and revenge. I have given you a few specimens of the duties which we owe to our fellow men. Similar remarks might be made respecting the remainder did my limits permit. Sufficient however have been mentioned for all present purposes.

3. The duties which you owe to your heavenly Father are now to be considered. You were created to believe in one impartial parent; to love him with supreme affection; to worship him in spirit and truth; to confide in his goodness with implicit confidence; to remember his manifold blessings with lively gratitude; to submit to his various dispensations with cheerfulness, and to render unreserved obedience to his beneficial commands. If you comply with these requisitions of your nature, you secure the happiness for which you were created, and glorify your Maker by living in all things as he intended.

In the first place, you were made to believe in the existence of One all-perfect Father. Many of your fellow men have not this belief. Some few in christian lands profess to have no faith in a Supreme Being. They have made themselves atheists either by false reasoning or depraved living. Their minds are in a state of confusion. They cannot give vent to the natural devotion of the human heart. All the works of creation are in disorder. They have no support in trials. They have no consolations in afflictions. They have no friend

in danger, no hope in the grave, no Father in heaven. How deplorable their condition. There are others in heathen countries who believe in many gods. They worship idols of their own making or creation or deification. Some they flatter and some they fear; some they despise and some they imitate; and nothing but wretchedness is the natural result of their erroneous belief. There are others again who believe in the One true God, but have no correct views of his real character. They ascribe to him actions which would disgrace a human parent. They consider him as both partial and revengeful. They fear he will not deal so well with his own children as they should did they possess his power. And for these and other reasons they suffer many hours of anxiety and misery. In all these cases the unhappiness and degradation are the natural consequences of unbelief or misbelief; the divine punishment for their disobedience to the laws of their mental constitution.

Now if you believe the representations of your Savior respecting your heavenly Father, you will entertain correct notions of his character and perfections and government. You will regard him as a self-existent creator, preserver and benefactor. You will view him as the merciful parent of his human family. You believe that he loves all his children with an infinite affection; that he overrules the events of this world in wisdom and benevolence; and that he never afflicts in anger or wrath or resentment. You believe that he sent his well beloved son to be the Savior of the world. It gives you delight to meditate upon his unbounded benevolence. So long as you render him gratitude, affection and obedience you preserve an unfailing confidence in his unchangeable love. In hours of sickness and death you know that your friend and Father will be with you

for your support and consolation. All this and much more is the natural consequence of your correct faith on this subject; the divine reward of your obedience to the laws of your intellectual and moral nature. And what can prevent these consequences from extending to another life? So far indeed as unbelief or misbelief are necessary no one can suffer the compunctions of conscience on their account either here or in the world to come. So far as any one has neglected or abused the light and evidence granted for his guidance, so far he must feel guilty and condemn his own wickedness. And so far as the true belief has aided any one in securing the happiness of this life and preparing for heaven, so far he carries the reward of his obedience in his own soul. Enough however has been said to illustrate this particular.

In the second place, you were made to love your heavenly Father supremely. Affections for this purpose have been implanted in your bosom. Motives to its cultivation are multiplied. You are free to conform to this law of your nature or to disregard its directions. Suppose you should neglect to cultivate the required affection. You would give your thoughts to earthly concerns. You would find the pleasures of this world transient and unsatisfactory. You would feel an aching void in your heart which no temporal blessings can ever supply. You would become uneasy, restless, discontented. You are not prepared for the changes and trials of life, and their occurrence brings dismay and anguish. All this and much more is the natural consequence of your neglect and ingratitude; the divine punishment of your disobedience.

But suppose you should endeavor to comply with the divine injunction. You will carefully study the works of your Father so as to have the evidence of his infinite

perfections deeply impressed upon your mind. You will meditate upon the various displays of his goodness in the world around. You will contemplate his unspeakable love in appearing for the salvation of a perishing world. You will examine the descriptions given of his paternal character by your divine Savior. You will call to mind the favors you have received at his hands. You will often raise your thoughts to him in spiritual devotion. You will aim to see him in every thing and every thing in him. In this way you will acquire a pure and ardent love for the only true God. And this affection will give rise to all your conduct; will sustain you under the greatest afflictions; will animate you in the discharge of incumbent duties; will console you under the heaviest afflictions, and will render you happy in some degree at all times. All this and much more is the natural consequence of your love; the divine reward for your obedience to the laws which were given to regulate your affections. And can these consequences be prevented from extending to the other existence? Can he who has blasphemed the name of his maker, despised his providence, disregarded his commands, join at once with those who have learned by long practice to love and worship their heavenly father? Impossible. I have thus given you a few illustrations of the duties which we owe to our Creator. I might make similar remarks concerning the remainder did my limits permit; but enough has been said to explain the first division of my subject.

Thus, my dear sir, have I given you a few brief illustrations of the natural rewards of obedience, and the natural punishments of transgression. Now if you could prove that the laws of your nature are perfect in their operation; if you could prove that the obedient always *enjoyed* a full and equitable reward; if you could prove

that the wicked always suffered a full and equitable punishment ; still the argument for a future retribution would remain unaffected. For you know that the consequences of both goodness and wickedness extend far beyond the period of action. You know that the consequences of a virtuous or dissipated youth extend through the whole of mortal life. Now before you can convince me that there is to be no future retribution, you must establish the three following positions. You must prove that the present life has no connexion whatever with the next existence ; and is not this supposition contrary to both reason and revelation ? You must also prove that we shall have no remembrance in the next life of what took place on earth ; and is not this also contrary to truth and scripture ? You must likewise prove that we experience a moral change in our passage from this world to the other ; and is not this likewise most absurd ? As these positions never have been proved true, I trust they never will while sound reasoning is respected. But you cannot prove the first particular, that the laws of your nature are perfect in their operation. No ; this cannot be accomplished. It is perfectly evident that various causes exist to modify their effects, so that the wicked are not always and fully punished, nor the righteous always and fully rewarded. Consequently a future retribution seems to my mind absolutely necessary to justify the ways of God to man. But as these topics will be more fully discussed hereafter I forbear, and request your continued attention to the remainder of the present subject.

II. I will now direct your attention to some instances of happiness and misery which are not generally considered to be the natural consequences of obedience and transgression. Some of these are undoubtedly caused by the miraculous interposition of our Father in favor of

goodness and against wickedness. Some are evidently the natural consequences of human conduct either wholly or in part, and the necessary results of the ordinary operations of the natural laws of the Creator. And some are neither the natural consequences either of observing or disregarding the divine commands, nor the miraculous interpositions of Deity either for reward or punishment. Let me give you a few brief illustrations of these several assertions.

1. I will first notice some of those instances in which our heavenly Father has miraculously interfered to reward the righteous and punish the wicked. All the examples of this character which are mentioned in the bible I receive as certain facts; for I find sufficient evidence to satisfy my mind that the scriptures contain the record of a divine revelation. There may have been other cases of a similar nature which are not contained in the sacred writings; but as I have no convincing proof of a miraculous interference in any given instance, I must withhold my assent from all such relations.

In the first place, look at some of the instances in which our heavenly Father interfered miraculously for the preservation and happiness of his obedient children. Enoch and Elijah were translated to heaven without passing through the pangs of a temporal death. Joseph received supernatural aid to interpret dreams which paved the way for his future greatness and glory. Daniel remained unharmed in a den of lions. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were uninjured in the midst of a burning fiery furnace. The Hebrews were conveyed through the Red Sea in safety. Manna from heaven was given them for food. Constant use diminished not the widow's oil. Many of the believing received favors through the commissioned Savior. The prison doors were opened to the persecuted apostle. Now we must

consider these and all similar cases recorded in scripture as miraculous interpositions of our Father, not merely to manifest his approbation of moral goodness, but to furnish satisfactory evidence of a divine revelation. Are the rewards of obedience equitably distributed in this world? Why then have not the righteous when in extreme danger and distress oftener received supernatural assistance? Here is surely strong indications of partiality, if this is the only state of retribution.

In the second place, look at some of those instances in which our Father has miraculously interfered to punish the wicked. The antedeluvians were destroyed with a flood. The Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea. The cities of the plain were overwhelmed with fire and brimstone. Korah and his company were swallowed by an earthquake. Ananias and Sapphira were instantly levelled with the dust. These and all similar examples recorded in the sacred writings must be considered miraculous interpositions of heaven. But for what purpose? As a punishment of the disobedient. Such is the declaration of revelation. But if your belief of no future retribution be true, these judgments cannot be called punishments. On the contrary I should consider them as miraculous rewards conferred on the depraved. Take the inhabitauts of Sodom for an example. They were exceedingly wicked. Of course they were truly wretched. They were suddenly destroyed. They were thus saved from the many miserable hours which they must have experienced had they continued on earth. They escaped those severe compunctions of conscience which a review of their wasted and profligate life must have produced. They were relieved from the pains and agonies of a lingering and unhappy death. From these and other temporal sufferings they were taken by a momentary destruction. Now if this was the end of their

sins and miseries; if they are never to endure another moment's pain and wretchedness; if they are to be pure and happy the instant they enter upon the next conscious existence, what did they lose by the overwhelming calamity? Nothing but punishment. What did they gain? A release from torment and an admission to unspeakable felicity. If this be the fact as you believe, must we not consider their destruction from the face of the earth a special favor of heaven? Surely it can be considered in no other light. What then do the scriptures mean by calling such events divine punishments? Not only so. On your own ground you cannot prove an acquitable retribution in this world. Why are so many cities which are equally wicked not specially favored with a sudden translation from degradation and indescribable suffering to celestial happiness? I have thus given you a specimen of what revelation pronounces divine rewards and punishments. Consider them in what light you please, and I believe you must admit that they furnish an unanswerable argument in proof of a future righteous retribution.

2. I will now notice some of those instances of preservation and destruction which individuals have denominated special or miraculous interpositions of our Father, but which I consider to be nothing more than the common results of the ordinary operations of the natural laws of our Creator. In order to convince me that any such occurrence is supernatural, you must first prove that the event could not have occurred in the ordinary course of Providence, such for instance as the raising to life of a dead man; and then you must also prove that some valuable purpose is to be answered by the interposition, such for example as establishing the truth of divine revelation. I do not think it will be possible to prove these two positions in any of those constantly occurring cases which people call special mercies and

judgments. Let me refer you to a few examples of this description.

In the first place, look to some of those instances in which it is supposed our Father miraculously interfered to confer favors upon his children. As I have the autobiography of the late Dr. Adam Clarke now before me, and as he has been ranked the most learned man among the Methodists, I will select two examples from this publication. Listen to his own words. "Having occasion to bring home a sack of grain from a neighboring village; it was laid over the bare back of his horse, and to keep it steady he rode on the top; one end being much heavier than the other, he found it difficult to keep it on: at last it preponderated so much, that it fell, and he under it; his back *happened* to come in contact with a pointed stone; he was taken up apparently dead; a *person* attempted to draw some blood from his arm, but in vain, none would flow, and his face and neck turned quite black. He lay insensible for more than two hours, during the greater part of which time, he was not known even to breathe, so that all said *he is dead.* He was brought near the fire and rubbed with warm cloths; at length a plenteous flow of blood from the orifice in his arm, was the means of promoting that respiration which had been so long obstructed. All had given him over for dead, and even now that he began to breathe, but with an oppressive sense of the acutest pain, few entertained hopes that he could long survive this accident. In about twenty-four hours it was thought that he might in an easy chair be carried home, which was about a mile distant. He however utterly refused to get into the chair, but while the men carried it, held it with his right hand, and walked by its side, and thus reached his father's house; and in a short time, to the great surprise of all who had witnessed the accident, was completely

restored. *Had he not been designed for matters of great and high importance, it is not likely in the* ORDINARY *course of nature he would have survived this accident.*" Now in this relation there is nothing more remarkable than what has occurred to hundreds of others; and I believe any scoundrel of the same bodily powers would have passed through the accident in the same favorable manner.

Let me present you another example from the same author. This is his own statement. "Mr. Wesley's time allotted for his visit to these Islands being expired, he purposed sailing for Southampton by the first fair wind, as he had appointed to be at Bristol on a particular day; but the wind continuing adverse, and an English brig touching at Guernsey on her way from France to Penzance they agreed for their passage, Mr. Clarke having obtained Mr. Wesley's permission to accompany them to England. They sailed out of Guernsey road on Thursday, the sixth of September, with a fine fair breeze; but in a short time, the wind which had continued slackening, died away, and afterwards rose up in that quarter which would have favored the passage to Southampton or Weymouth, had they been so bound. The contrary wind blew in to a tight breeze, and they were obliged to make frequent tacks, in order to clear the Island. Mr. Wesley was sitting reading in the cabin, and hearing the noise and bustle which were occasioned by putting about the vessel, to stand on her different tacks, he put his head above deck and inquired what was the matter? Being told the wind was become contrary, and the ship was obliged to tack, he said,—*Then let us go to prayer.* His own company, who were upon deck, walked down, and at his request Dr. Coke, Mr. Bradford, and Mr. Clarke went to prayer. After the latter had ended, Mr. Wesley broke out into fervent supplication, which seemed to be more the offspring of

rong *faith* than mere *desire*, his words were remarka-
le, as well as the spirit, evident feeling, and manner in
hich they were uttered. The power of his petition was
lt by all; he rose from his knees, made no kind of
emark, but took up his book and continued his reading.
Ir. Clarke went upon deck, and what was his surprise
hen he found the vessel standing her right course, with
steady breeze, which slackened not, till, carrying them
t the rate of nine or ten knots an hour, they anchored
afely near St. Michael's Mount, in Penzance bay. On
he sudden and favorable change of wind Mr. Wesley
nade no remark; so fully did he *expect to be heard*, that
e took for granted *he was heard*. *Such* answers to
rayer he was in the *habit* of receiving; and therefore to
im, the occurrence was not strange. Mr. Wesley was
o ordinary man; every hour, every minute of his time
vas devoted to the great work which God had given him
o do; and it is not to be wondered at that he was favor-
d, and indeed *accredited*, with many signal interpositions
f divine providence. Mr. Clarke himself has confes-
ed, that high as his opinion was of Mr. Wesley's piety
nd faith, he had no hope that the wind which had long
et in the opposite quarter, and which had just now
changed in a very natural way, would immediately veer
about, except by providential interference, to blow in a
contrary direction. There were too many marked ex-
traordinary circumstances in the case, to permit any at-
tentive observer to suppose that the change had been
effected by any natural or casual occurrence." Now if
Mr. Clarke can prove that the wind would not have
changed if Mr. Wesley's prayer had not been offered,
then the first step will have been taken to establish a special
providence; but this can never be done, and consequently
we have no evidence in the case whatever. And to
suppose that God Almighty had made John Wesley an

"accredited" messenger of his providence requires a degree of credulity which I do not possess. These specimens are sufficient to show that no satisfactory proof exists in confirmation of modern miracles.

In the second place, look at the other side of the question. Instances have occurred in which individuals suppose that our Father interferes miraculously for the punishment and destruction of his children. Since I have selected the former examples from a Methodist book, I will still confine my remarks to the same denomination. When the unitarian church in this place was struck by lightning, some of the members of this sect pronounced it a special judgment. This was their calm and deliberate opinion. They believed that our Father had departed from his usual course to manifest his displeasure against our peculiar sentiments. Not long since the Methodist chapel in a neighboring town was struck in a similar manner and greatly damaged. Had it not been for the timely interference of human means the building would have been wholly destroyed. Now will they be consistent? Will they call this a special judgment, to manifest the divine disapprobation of their distinguishing belief. Not only so. It is but a few years since a vessel which was conveying a large number of their missionaries with their families from one island to another, was wrecked and all the passengers drowned. A more distressing accident has scarcely ever been recorded. Did God interfere for their destruction? Is there not as much evidence of this as there is that he interfered to save the life of Clarke and hasten Wesley on his voyage? Precisely the same. Will it be so regarded? By no means. The truth of the case is simply this. When an unfortunate event happens to those who reject our creed we pronounce it a special interference of our Father for their punishment. But when

an occurrence precisely similar overwhelms any of our own denomination, we are ready to exclaim, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Why may not the miser affirm that his property has been gained through the special assistance of divine Providence, since he has so far outreached his neighbors in the pursuit of wealth? Why may not the pirate attribute his success to the supernatural interference of heaven? I see no reason why they may not advance these claims with as much propriety as those religionists who pronounce the natural results of their zeal and activity and impudence special mercies. No. It is not possible to prove that God now interferes in a miraculous manner either to reward the righteous or punish the wicked. This is not his mode of governing his rational creatures. A day of perfect retribution will yet arrive; and then those who have flourished by their iniquity will receive the recompense of their labors, and those who have been crushed by the oppression of the depraved will rise in their true dignity, and enjoy the rewards prepared for all who live sober, righteous and godly lives. I have said sufficient to show that we have no evidence of miracles at the present day, either for the reward of the holy or the punishment of the sinful.

3. I will thirdly refer you to some of those instances of prosperity and adversity which are evidently the natural consequences of human conduct either wholly or in part; and the necessary results of the ordinary operations of the divine laws. Under this head I should include all uncommon success in mercantile, civil or religious affairs; all pestilence, war and persecution; all earthquakes, famines and conflagrations. A few illustrations may be mentioned.

In the first place, look at the success of some sect of religionists. I will refer in this instance to those in our

own land who are called *christians*. It is about thirty years since a few individuals renounced all sectarian names, discarded all human creeds, and began to preach the simple truths of unitarian christianity. Their increase has been beyond all former example. They have now more than twelve hundred churches in this country, and for piety and morality they will bear an honorable comparison with any other denomination. Now has our Father given them any special assistance? Some are ready to answer this question in the affirmative. But for one I have no hesitation in giving a decided negative. All this success is the natural result of human instrumentality. The preachers adapted themselves to the condition and wants of the hearers. They talked to them in an earnest and plain and direct manner. They persevered with all becoming zeal; and they soon received the fruit of their labors. I might make similar remarks concerning the methodists. Not only so. If the same means are used to propagate false doctrines very considerable progress will be made. Look at the mormonites. They are most laborious and indefatigable in their exertions. They are making converts to their wild and absurd opinions even in our own vicinity. So in England the power of speaking unknown languages is increasing with fearful rapidity. And how did the Arabian imposter carry forward his ambitious designs? You may just as well consider the prevalence of his religion the result of special divine interposition as to regard the unusual advancement of any one christian sect to be a miraculous favor conferred on its votaries. In all such cases there is nothing more nor less than the natural consequences of great zeal, untiring perseverance and well selected means.

In the second place, look at the prevalence of the cholera. It has shown no partiality to opinions, but

taken the hindoo, the mahometan, the jew, the christian and the infidel. It has however observed certain rules in its operation. Those who have violated the laws of their physical nature are the first victims and almost the only victims. Is this pestilence a special judgment for the punishment of mankind? So many have believed. I think the contrary. Had all men observed the laws of their animal constitution the cholera would never have prevailed. Most of the deaths which have occurred in this disease, I regard as the natural consequence of their disobedience. When contagion is increased by great mortality, and many are unfitted for resistance through the influence of fear, no doubt the innocent perish with the guilty. It is also evident that many have inherited weakly and sickly bodies from those who in some way or other violated the laws of their physical nature. So that after you have counted those on whom the vices of their progenitors were visited; and those who had injured their constitution either ignorantly or in a good cause; and those who had not received sufficient nourishing sustenance; and those who had abused their nature by excessive eating and drinking and licentiousness; and those whose unmanly fears prostrated them at once, you will find but a few victims of the cholera remaining. Had there been no disobedience I firmly believe there would have been little or none of this temporal punishment. But if your doctrine of no future retribution be true, I see not but we must regard the cholera as a special blessing to the miserable victims who have been hurried to the grave. Take the great multitude of prostitutes who have been swept away by its ravages. A more degraded, polluted, miserable, wretched class of human creatures cannot be imagined. They were constantly in a perfect earthly hell. Now if this is the end of all their sufferings; if they can look

back with approbation and delight on their profligate lives; if they enjoy uninterrupted happiness; if their felicity is never to be disturbed by one pang of remorse on account of their unparalleled depravity; then I must regard the pestilence which hastened them from unutterable torments to heavenly glory a very special blessing to their souls. I see not how any benevolent person can take any other view of the subject, on your ground of belief. Although I do not consider any prevailing epidemic to be a miraculous interposition of our Father, yet I believe all events above our control are wisely ordered by his superintending providence. I could go on to make similar remarks respecting earthquakes and tornadoes, tempests of thunder and lightning and all the uncommon convulsions of nature. All these I regard as the natural result of the operation of divine laws, and not as a designed punishment for wickedness.

4. In the fourth place, look at those sufferings which are neither the natural consequences of disobedience to divine commands, nor miraculous interpositions for the punishment of wickedness. Read the history of the world; look abroad into society; enter into the retirement of domestic life; and you will be convinced that the innocent, the virtuous, the righteous have experienced the most severe, unceasing, excruciating sufferings. You will be convinced that these torments were inflicted by their fellow men, and not because they violated the laws of their maker, but for the very reason in many instances that they were pure and holy. How many christian wives are daily made miserable by their brutal and intemperate husbands? How many philanthropists have sacrificed their ease, their influence, their liberty, their life in the cause of suffering humanity? How many worthy reformers have been fined, tortured, imprisoned, and burned for their conscientious adherence

to the principles of religious liberty? How many disinterested patriots have shared in toils and hardships and cruelties and death for the benefit of an ungrateful multitude. In every war how many of the innocent are made wretched by the crimes of the wicked? Time would fail me to mention the instances in which the just suffer the severest torments from the injustice of their brethren. Now how will you dispose of all these facts? Why have so many experienced such dreadful cruelties? Because they have transgressed the laws of their nature? By no means. They suffered on account of their very obedience. What benefit are they to receive for this indescribable anguish? Perhaps you will say that they may learn by their inflictions to put a firm trust in their heavenly Father, to be weaned from the vanities of this world, and to enjoy the smiles of an approving conscience. All this is very well. But if all men are to be rewarded according to their deeds, how can you call this an equal retribution? I see no way in which you can avoid this difficulty on your scheme but to affirm that these individuals were great sufferers only because they were great sinners. This is the language of Job's comforters; and if it was incorrect in ancient days I know not that the lapse of ages has converted it into truth. Admit the fact of a future righteous retribution and the difficulty vanishes; and without admitting this truth you cannot possibly reconcile the unparalleled sufferings of the righteous with the justice of your heavenly Father.

But are the persecutors always punished in exact accordance with their wickedness? Surely not. For many really believe they are doing God service in their abominable cruelties, and consequently they receive the approbation instead of the reproaches of their own conscience. Others *are too* hardened in sin to suffer

any compunctions on account of their crimes. Now in order to make rewards and punishments equal the merits and deserts of all mankind, must there not be another existence, where the secrets of all hearts shall be exposed; where all circumstances shall be considered; where the blinded bigot shall confess the truth; where the right and the wrong of their present course shall be manifested to every soul, and where every one shall be rewarded and punished according to the deeds done in the body. As I shall have occasion to discuss this subject more fully hereafter I will not dwell longer on this point. I have given you such illustrations of my views of divine rewards and punishments as my limits will permit. Many very important questions I have left altogether untouched. Many more I have but briefly and superficially examined. And none have been treated with that fulness which they really demand. I have said enough however to give you some insight into my opinions on the various topics connected with this branch of my discussion. And I hope you will examine my remarks and statements and conclusions with all proper freedom and boldness, and embrace whatever of truth may have been elicited and established.

LETTER II.

My Dear Sir,

You contend that a perfect retribution does not take place in the present existence. You believe that the righteous are always and equitably and fully rewarded by their righteousness; and that the wicked are always and equitably and fully punished by their wickedness. Now I feel confident that your belief on this point has no foundation in reality or revelation. And I will endeavor to prove that no perfect retribution takes place in this world. I contend that the righteous are not always and equitably and fully rewarded by their righteousness; and that the wicked are not always and equitably and fully punished by their wickedness. Some of the evidence which establishes the truth of my positions I will now present to your consideration.

I. My first argument for believing that a perfect retribution does not take place in the present existence is drawn from the Old Testament. You admit that Moses was divinely commissioned, and that the prophets and other writers of the hebrew scriptures were divinely

inspired. Consequently any clear evidence from these ancient writings in proof of my positions must be satisfactory and conclusive. My limits will permit me to select but a few particulars.

1. I appeal to the testimony of Moses. He repeatedly declares that punishments were inflicted on the disobedient. Consequently sin itself does not punish the sinner sufficiently. This is the practical declaration of the omniscient Jehovah. Turn to the book of Leviticus and you will find the following command. "If a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness; they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they." Now if sin itself punishes the sinner sufficiently, then this burning was altogether more punishment than the guilty really deserved. Consequently you must admit either that Moses under the divine direction inflicted undeserved and unjust punishment, or that your belief in the sufficient punishment of sin itself is erroneous. Turn to the book of Numbers and you may read these words. "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man who had gathered sticks on the sabbath day. And the Lord said unto Moses, the man shall be surely put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones and he died." Now if the sin of disobedience to the divine law had punished the offender sufficiently of itself, then the stoning to death was a cruel infliction which he did not deserve. Consequently you must admit either that the Lord commanded an unjust and undeserved punishment, or that your belief in a perfect earthly retribution is incorrect. This argument may be thus summarily stated. Various severe punishments were threatened in the mosaic law; they were inflicted upon the several transgressors to the very letter; con-

sequently the sin itself does not always punish the sinner sufficiently; or the Lord authorized cruel and undeserved inflictions. Take which horn of the dilemma you please. For my own part I believe the Almighty is perfect in knowledge, and of course that the argument from this source that sin does not always punish the sinner sufficiently is perfectly unanswerable. Many more instances of a similar character might be selected, but these are sufficient for all present purposes. Leviticus 20, 14. Numbers 15, 32.

2. I appeal to the prophets and other writers of the hebrew scriptures. They repeatedly affirm that a perfect retribution does not take place in this world. Consequently their testimony must be invalidated before your theory can be established. Turn to the confession of Ezra. "Thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities." Now if God punished them less than their iniquities deserved, then a perfect retribution did not take place in this instance. Consequently you must admit either that this writer made a false assertion, or that your belief in a perfect earthly retribution is erroneous. Listen to the words of David. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Now if God did not punish them exactly according to their wickedness, then no perfect retribution took place in this instance. Consequently you must admit either that the Psalmist deliberately penned a falsehood, or that your theory is plainly contradicted in the scriptures. What does the Lord declare by the mouth of Ezekiel. "And he shall know that I am the Lord, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, not according to your corrupt doings." Now if the Almighty did not deal with them precisely according to their iniquities, then a perfect retribution did not take

place in this instance. Consequently you must either deny the truth of the divine declaration, or admit the incorrectness of your opinions. What is the assertion of Solomon? "There be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous." Now if the wicked were blessed and the righteous cursed, then surely no perfect retribution took place in this instance. Consequently you must either accuse the wise man of publishing an untruth, or admit the correctness of my positions. The argument from this source may be thus summarily stated. The sacred writers repeatedly affirm that the righteous are not always and fully rewarded, and that the wicked are not always and fully punished. Now they have either asserted numerous falsehoods or your belief in a perfect earthly retribution is erroneous. Take which horn of the dilemma you please. For my own part I believe these holy men who spoke as they were moved by the divine spirit declared the literal truth in all these examples, and consequently the argument for my positions from this quarter is perfectly unanswerable. Many more passages of a similar character might be produced were it necessary for the support of my opinions. Ezra 9, 13. Psalms 103, 10. Ezekiel 20, 44. Ecclesiastes 8, 14.

3. I appeal to the various cruelties which were inflicted on the ancient worthies. You will admit that they were tormented in the most inhuman and barbarous manner. Now you must prove that their sinfulness deserved all this punishment, or admit that they were not rewarded according to their goodness. Turn to the epistle to the Hebrews, and you will find the following affecting account of their persecutions. "They had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of

bonds and imprisonments; they were stoned; they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Now you admit the correctness of this description. You also acknowledge that these injured individuals were among the most acceptable worshippers of the only true God. You must likewise grant that the wicked inflicted these cruelties in a very great degree, because they were righteous and reproved iniquity. Now are you ready to affirm that these distinguished worthies enjoyed as much happiness as their goodness merited? Are you willing to aver that they suffered no more misery than their transgression deserved? All this you must do in order to establish your belief in a perfect earthly retribution. And this is not all. If you declare that they were tormented no more than their iniquities demanded, then you must show how their enemies received a degree of punishment in proportion to their more aggravated sinfulness. But if you allow that their trials were more severe than their depravity required, then you abandon your ground of a perfect earthly retribution. This argument then may be thus summarily stated. Many of the best men of the ancient church were most barbarously treated. Either they suffered no more punishment than their iniquities demanded, and enjoyed as much happiness as their excellencies deserved; or no perfect retribution took place in the examples quoted. Either their persecutors experienced much greater degrees of torment on account of their more aggravated sinfulness, of which we have no account on record, or no perfect retribution took place in these particular instances. Take which side of the dilemma you please. For my

own part I believe the cruelties of the ancient worthies were undeserved? and consequently the argument from these cases in proof of my belief is perfectly unanswerable Descriptions of a similar character might be greatly extended did my cause require their assistance. Hebrews 11, 36.

4. Perhaps you will now ask, if there are not some passages in the Old Testament which favor your belief of a perfect earthly retribution? which either teach or imply that men are always and equitably and fully rewarded and punished according to their deeds in the present existence? I answer that I have never discovered a single text of this description. I know your writers often select sentences from the hebrew scriptures in support of your doctrine. I will therefore briefly notice those which are generally quoted for this purpose. I think you will instantly perceive that not one of the number has the least bearing upon the question at issue. Hear the assertion of Solomon. "The way of transgressors is hard." Very true. But do these words either affirm or imply that every transgressor is always and equitably and fully punished in this world? By no means. Then this text has nothing to do with the controversy. Listen to the declaration of Isaiah. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." This I believe. But does this text either teach or imply that every wicked person is always and fully punished in this life, and that the moment they enter upon the next existence, peace and happiness will be their portion? Nothing of the kind; and consequently your belief derives no support from this passage. Observe the remark of the Psalmist. "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." Very well. But what has this assertion to do with your theory? *Nothing* at all; for it contains no intimation either that

all the righteous are always and fully rewarded on earth, or that they shall be on a perfect level with the wicked the moment they enter the life beyond the grave. Mark the affirmation of Solomon. "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Certainly. Does any one dispute the truth of this observation? But does it either assert or imply that rewards are always proportioned to the merits of the obedient, and that hereafter no distinction will be made between them and the most abandoned? Surely not; and therefore this verse has no bearing on the points in debate. Listen to another proverb of Solomon. "Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner." What does this sentence prove? Not your doctrine of a perfect earthly retribution most certainly. For it neither affirms nor implies either that the righteous are always and equitably and fully rewarded on earth, or that the wicked are always and equitably and fully punished in this world, or that both righteous and wicked will enjoy equal degrees of heavenly felicity. On the contrary the passage as it now reads is in direct opposition to your doctrine; for it distinctly declares that while the righteous are recompensed in the earth, the wicked and sinner shall be much more than recompensed; and if this be the fact, then no perfect earthly retribution takes place in this instance. But I will not waste words on a text which has no connexion with the controversy; and how any person could ever quote this in favor of your belief is more than I can understand. The correct translation of the passage is the following, as you may ascertain by consulting any hebrew scholar. "Behold the righteous in the earth, he shall be recompensed; and surely the wicked and the sinner." Yes they *shall* all be recompensed because a perfect retribution does not take place at the present time.

Other passages of a similar import might doubtless be quoted, but these must be considered a fair specimen since I have taken them as brought forward and arranged by one of your preachers. You can determine for yourself that not one of the number has any connexion with the point in dispute; and I think you must be ready to admit that no texts can be selected from these ancient records in direct proof of your belief in a perfect earthly retribution. Proverbs 13, 15. Isaiah 57, 21. Psalms 119, 165. Proverbs 3, 17. Proverbs 11, 31.

What then is the testimony of the Old Testament on the question in controversy? Judge for yourself. You have seen that severe punishments were threatened, and inflicted upon the disobedient, by the omniscient Jehovah; and consequently you must conclude that he does not believe that sin itself always punishes the sinner sufficiently. You have also seen, that the prophets and other sacred writers repeatedly affirm, that the wicked are not always and fully punished on earth, and that the righteous are not always and fully rewarded in the present existence; and consequently you must infer that the infinite Spirit who moved them to publish such statements did not believe in a perfect earthly retribution. You have likewise seen that many of the ancient worthies were most cruelly tormented, while some of the most depraved were highly prosperous; and consequently you must determine that rewards and punishments have not been always distributed in exact proportion to the character of individuals. And finally you have seen that no passages can be produced which either teach or imply that a perfect retribution takes place in this world; and consequently you must admit that a belief in this doctrine is not supported by a shadow of evidence from the hebrew scriptures. Is not my first argument in proof of my belief that no perfect retribution takes

place in the present existence perfectly satisfactory and conclusive?

II. My second argument for believing that a perfect retribution does not take place in the present existence is drawn from the New Testament. You admit that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of the living God. You also acknowledge that he was sanctified and sent by the universal Father to be the Savior of sinners. You likewise grant that the apostles were divinely inspired, and qualified to preach the gospel to every creature. You confess that their writings contain the record of a divine revelation. Consequently any clear evidence from these books in favor of my position must be satisfactory and conclusive. My limits will permit me to select but a few particulars.

1. I appeal to the sufferings of Jesus Christ. You believe that he was tried and tempted when on earth. You also believe that he resisted all temptations, and lived a sinless life. Now did he receive the full reward of his obedience in this world? Did he suffer no more misery than he deserved? Call to mind some of his afflictions. Was it no suffering for his pure soul to be tempted by appetite, by ambition, by worldly glory? Was it no suffering to have his motives suspected, his actions misrepresented, his words perverted? Was it no suffering to be destitute of the necessaries of life, persecuted by bitter enemies, and constantly exposed to destruction? Was there no suffering when his soul was exceeding sorrowful in the garden, and he sweat as it were great drops of blood? Was there no suffering in being betrayed by a chosen disciple, tried by prejudiced and cowardly judges, accused by false witnesses and condemned without evidence or justice? Was it no suffering to be deserted by his friends, denied by his most zealous followers, scourged by unfeeling hire-

lings, and mocked by the depraved and insulting rabble? Was it no suffering to have his temples lacerated with thorns, his feet and hands mangled with large nails, his body suspended on a cross like the vilest slaves? And was it no suffering to hang in this most excruciating agony for hours, until the breath of life departed? Yes; all these were real sufferings, and these are not all that might be enumerated. Now how can you explain these indescribable torments in consistency with your theory? You defend the simple humanity of Jesus as well as the majority of your denomination. Can you say that his happiness on earth was exactly proportioned to his holiness? If you cannot, then you must admit that he was not fully rewarded for his obedience in the present existence. Can you affirm that he suffered no more than his character demanded? If you cannot, then you must acknowledge that he experienced more misery than he deserved. In either case no perfect retribution took place. This argument then may be thus briefly stated. Either Jesus received happiness and misery in exact proportion to his conduct, or your belief in a perfect retribution is erroneous. Take which side of the dilemma you please. For my own part I believe that the sinless Savior suffered undeserved torment, and consequently the argument from his example in favor of my position is perfectly unanswerable.

2. I appeal to the declarations of our Savior. Did he ever inform his apostles that they should be rewarded on earth according to their merits? Did he once assure them that their misery in this world would be proportioned to their iniquities? I find no record of any such instructions. On the contrary I can turn to many of a directly opposite character. Listen to a few specimens of his teachings on this subject. "In the world ye shall have

tribulation." Why so? Paul assures us that every soul who worketh evil shall experience tribulation. Now was their suffering occasioned by vicious conduct? or was it drawn upon them by their christian behavior. If you affirm that their iniquities produced their miseries, and that they were punished exactly according to their deeds, you will make them the most abandoned wretches in existence, because their torments were almost unparalleled in the history of human sufferings. If you admit that their goodness excited others to persecute and injure them, then it follows of course that a perfect retribution did not take place in this particular example. Turn to another paragraph of a similar character. "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before kings and governors for my name sake. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against the parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service." Here you learn that the divine master distinctly informed his disciples of the cruel, unceasing, inhuman persecutions to which they would be constantly exposed during their earthly ministry. And why must they be so severely and unremittingly tormented? Simply because they were engaged in the noblest employment of humanity; simply because they were to become the instruments of everlasting benefits to the children of men. But did this heaven-sent teacher mean to convey the idea that their miseries would be only equal to their demerits, and their joys exactly proportioned to their virtues? Did he even insinuate that they and their brutal enemies and murderers

would receive the same degree of happiness when they entered the next existence? You must return an affirmative answer to these questions, or admit the fallacy of your opinions. Not only so. Select one instance of his declaration concerning the nation and generation to which he belonged. "Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute; that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple; verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation." Now what do you make of this statement. Does it teach that a perfect individual retribution takes place in this world? Directly the contrary. Former generations had not received their full share of temporal punishment; but their iniquities were to be visited on the present inhabitants of the country. Consequently God has not rendered unto all according to their deeds in this life, and there must be an adjustment of these inequalities beyond the grave or the character of our Father suffers in the estimation of impartial judges. This argument then may be thus stated. Jesus explicitly taught that rewards and punishments, happiness and misery were not to be distributed either on the apostles or his own nation exactly according to their individual characters. You must therefore accuse him of either ignorance or falsehood, or admit the error of your peculiar belief on this question. For my own part I receive the word of Jesus as divine truth, and consequently the argument from his declarations in favor of my position is perfectly unanswerable. John 16, 33. Matthew 10, 16. John 16, 2. Luke 11, 49.

3. I appeal to the sufferings and declarations of the

apostles. Did they experience the persecutions which their divine master predicted? Yes, to the very letter. Read the history of their labors and trials and sufferings, and you will find enough to excite the sympathetic tear, and give anguish to the benevolent heart. Take merely an account of Paul's early experience. "Are they ministers of Christ? I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft; of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often; in perils of water; in perils of robbers; in perils by my own countrymen; in perils by the heathen; in perils in the city; in perils in the wilderness; in perils in the sea; in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness; in faintings often; in cold and nakedness. Besides these things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knoweth that I lie not." Now will you say that Paul received as much happiness in this life as his goodness deserved? Will you say that he endured no more misery than his iniquities demanded? Will you say that he is to be on an equality hereafter in point of felicity with his malignant and depraved enemies and murderers? All this you must say, or admit that no perfect retribution takes place in this world. Not only so. Take merely one of the apostolic declarations. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Now if rewards and punishments are equitably distributed in this world, they could not have been the most miserable unless they were the most depraved. The certainty of another existence has nothing to do with the question. If they were pure and holy beyond others

they must have experienced the natural consequences of their goodness in some degree. Will you then affirm that these early and obedient christians were the most degraded, or will you admit that no perfect retribution takes place in this mortal life? Will you aver that years of painful and unremitting labor, accompanied with almost unceasing torments, in the cause of pure religion, will furnish no better claims to heavenly happiness than an uninterrupted series of debaucheries, cruelties, persecutions and murders? You must say this, or admit that your belief on this subject is erroneous. Take which horn of the dilemma you please. For my own part I believe the apostles had some powerful motives to support them under all their exertions and sufferings; and I can think of none sufficient for this purpose unless I admit a future state of righteous retribution. 2 Corinthians 11, 23. 1 Cor. 15, 19.

4. Perhaps you will now ask, if there are no passages in the New Testament which teach or imply that a perfect retribution takes place on the earth? I know of none whatever. And what is still more remarkable I have never seen any which related to the subject quoted by your writers. Surely they would not have omitted so important a service for their cause if any thing plausible could have been advanced. This fact speaks volumes in proof of my position. For how can you account for the silence of the sacred writers on this question, if you can call that a silence which is constantly proclaiming the opposite doctrine? All the world then believed in future rewards and punishments. All the people supposed that present retribution was not perfect. If they were mistaken in this belief was not the error worthy of correction, since one simple declaration of our Savior would have settled the question forever? No such information was communicated. On the contrary

a constant reference is made to rewards and punishments. They are spoken of as something future, and not as immediately following the action. Did you ever notice this peculiarity of the divine instructions? Shall and will are almost uniformly used. How different would have been the language of the inspired preacher had all retribution been limited to this life. He that sins shall be miserable in the present state; he that obeys shall be happy in this world; both shall be happy in the next existence. Such must have been the ideas conveyed in some one conversation at least, had your doctrine been then believed. But you will say that the threatenings in the gospel relate to the destruction of Jerusalem. This mode of interpretation appears to my mind the most absurd and ridiculous imaginable. Let me set forth some of its irreconcilable contradictions. The universal Father sends Jesus to save people from their sins. He spends no small portion of his short ministry in warning his countrymen against the coming dissolution of their nation. He earnestly entreats them to embrace his religion so as to escape the dreadful calamity. He suffers every indignity and even a cruel and ignominious death in accomplishing this object. His apostles are filled with the same spirit. They endure unparalleled hardships and afflictions in inducing men to receive the new religion. They warn them repeatedly and solemnly to repent so as to avoid temporal death a few weeks sooner than the natural termination of their mortal life. They also suffer martyrdom in this noble cause. All this while both Jesus and his apostles know that the Jewish people are corrupt and sinful beyond measure. They know their miseries must be great and poignant. They also know that all wickedness and torments terminate with the dissolution of the body. They know that all who perish in the destruction of their

city will be as well prepared for future happiness as the poor christians who are doomed to wear out a lingering life in wretchedness. Now is it possible to suppose that men of common sense with this knowledge could have pursued such a ridiculous course? Is not the very supposition absurd in the highest degree? Is there one single trait of human nature discoverable in the whole business? Suppose you knew that New Orleans was to be destroyed next year, and that all the inhabitants who perished would enjoy heavenly happiness the moment they entered the next conscious existence. Suppose you also knew that by exposing yourself to the most cruel sufferings for some months you could induce a number of the people to embrace your religion, and that those whom you converted would leave the city and with you must live a life of almost continual sorrow. Would you enter upon missionary labors under such conditions? If your doctrine of universalism be true this is the precise situation in which the Savior and his apostles were placed. Let your own feelings be a test of the truth of your system. I cannot enlarge, but must request you to give these questions your candid consideration.

What then is the testimony of the New Testament on the subject in controversy? You have seen that your Savior and his apostles were not rewarded according to their deeds; and consequently that no perfect retribution takes place on earth. You have also seen that their declarations confirm this conclusion, and consequently they had no belief in the equitable distribution of rewards and punishments in the present existence. You have likewise seen that they gave no encouragement to your belief either by their words or the course they pursued; and consequently your opinion on this point derives no support from their authority. Is not my second argument conclusive?

III. My third argument for believing that a perfect retribution does not take place in this world is drawn from the unequal operation of human governments. You have already seen that sin itself does not always and fully punish the sinner; and that goodness itself does not always and fully reward the virtuous. The only remaining course for establishing your position is to prove that these natural inequalities in happiness and misery are rectified by human legislation. But here also you are doomed to meet disappointment. For the argument from the operation of human laws is conclusive in my favor. My limits will permit me to select but a few examples.

1. Human laws provide no rewards for the virtuous. The depraved receive equal benefit with the holy. Look into society. You see a man who is thoroughly christian in his whole character; in the purity of his motives; in the regulation of his thoughts; in the government of his appetites and passions; in his dealings and social intercourse; in his benevolent feelings and common conversation; in his devotion to the performance of all his incumbent duties. He sincerely endeavors to imitate the example, obey the precepts, imbibe the spirit and submit to the authority of his chosen master. No one can justly accuse him of a disregard of the laws of man or his maker. You notice his next neighbor. He is thoroughly unprincipled. He indeed endeavors to escape the penalties of the laws of the commonwealth. But this is all. He defrauds his creditors; he slanders his acquaintances; he draws the young into dissipation; he abuses his wife and family; he blasphemes every thing sacred; in short he is a scoundrel of the most advanced degree. Now both these receive equal benefits from our government. Their reward from the state is the same. And what is this? Why, their rights, liberty, property

and reputation are equally protected. This is nearly all the good that human legislation pretends to effect; no distinctions can well be made between the righteous and wicked. If you call public offices of any value, you will find that men of little or no principle are frequently promoted to posts of honor, and trust, and emolument; and in some nations such individuals are the most likely to obtain these miserable prizes. It is therefore perfectly evident in the first place, that human legislation does not contribute to establish a perfect earthly retribution, because it can make no discrimination between the most depraved and the most holy, but must confer its benefits on all alike, whether wicked or righteous.

2. Human laws do not always punish the guilty; the innocent sometimes suffer in their stead. Look at a record of the great crimes which have been committed in our own country during the past century. Enumerate the cases of theft, slander, arson, rape, robbery, piracy, murder. How many of the criminals escaped the penalty of human laws? The number is not small. If those who were detected and punished suffered no more than their iniquities demanded, then those who escaped both detection and punishment have not received an equal share of misery. In either case the retribution is not perfect. Not only so. Many of the innocent have been condemned with and for the guilty. They have suffered for crimes which they never committed. They have not been able to convince their judges of their innocence. And for want of satisfactory evidence they have been doomed to disgrace and punishment. And surely this is not a case of perfect retribution. Examples of both kinds might be selected; names and dates might be mentioned; but as facts of this character are within the knowledge of every intelligent man, I need not enlarge. Neither you nor any

one will deny the correctness of my statements. If then human laws do not always punish the guilty, and do sometimes punish the innocent, there can be no perfect retribution in these instances. Consequently the evidence against your position from this source is perfectly conclusive.

3. Human laws do not proportion punishment to the criminality of the offence. In England many crimes of a very trifling character are punishable by death. In this commonwealth but few of any description are considered capital. Now a man may forfeit his life, either by the stealing of a horse, or by murdering a whole family. You perceive there is a very great difference in the degrees of guilt, but no difference is made in the punishment. So also many criminal practices are wholly overlooked by other governments. Go into more despotic regions and you will find slight offences severely punished while flagrant vices are unnoticed. You must see that no human being can make laws for all cases, or can proportion punishment to crime, or can make the necessary allowances for palliating circumstances. Consequently there can be no perfect earthly retribution in the many cases of this kind that might be selected.

4. Many crimes cannot be punished by human laws. Illustrations of this remark are constantly occurring. You have known a very respectable man pressed for money. His family were suffering for the necessaries of life. He forged a check upon one of our banks, and obtained perhaps five hundred dollars. He was detected, tried, condemned, disgraced, punished, ruined. His nearest neighbor engages largely in business. He gets a vast amount of property in his possession. He secures a large proportion of it beyond the reach of his creditors. He stops payment. The remaining stock

pays a few cents on a dollar. Many an honest laborer is defrauded; many an industrious mechanic is injured; much of the earnings of industry and perseverance are lost. After a time the bankrupt commences his business anew, is permitted to retain his rank in society, lives at his ease on his ill-gotten wealth. Now is not his crime almost infinitely greater than the forgery? Why then should not his punishment be as severe? Can you call this a perfect earthly retribution? And are there not hundreds and thousands of similar instances to be mentioned in this connexion? Do they not prove beyond all dispute that men are not always rewarded and punished according to their deeds in this world?

What then is the testimony of legislation on the question in controversy? You have seen that human laws are and must be unequal in their operation; they furnish no reward for the righteous; they punish the innocent occasionally and frequently permit the guilty to escape; they cannot proportion punishment to the degrees of criminality, nor take cognizance of many and aggravated offences. Consequently they prove beyond all doubt that a perfect retribution does not take place in the present existence. Is not my third argument then perfectly unanswerable?

IV. My fourth argument for believing that a perfect retribution does not take place in this world is drawn from the unequal operation of circumstances. The happiness and misery of mankind are much affected by the situations in which they are placed. Many are punished for doing what is right in itself; and many are rewarded for doing what is wrong in itself. If this is in any degree the fact there can be no perfect distribution of temporal rewards and punishments. Many examples might be selected, but my limits will permit me to notice but a small number.

1. You believe that we were created free. You hold that liberty is one of the greatest earthly blessings. You contend that every one should strive for its enjoyment. You affirm that all should labor to have mankind enjoy this unalienable right. All who engage in this patriotic duty you pronounce worthy men. Now turn your attention to unhappy Poland. You see her honest, brave, virtuous, high-minded, enlightened patriots imprisoned, tortured, murdered, driven into exile. You see their helpless infants, their innocent sons and daughters, their worthy brethren and sisters, their honored wives and aged parents, persecuted in the most inhuman manner, starved, mangled, polluted, burned and destroyed from the face of the earth. The very relation of their sufferings is sufficient to awaken the most painful feelings. And why are they doomed to experience all this misery? Because they have been laboring to establish liberty in their nation. Because they have been engaged in performing what you pronounce a most important duty. Now can you say that they have been rewarded according to their deeds? Can you affirm that their punishment is deserved? Perhaps you will aver that they enjoy the approbation of their conscience. Very true. But will this give them their families, their homes, their possessions, their murdered relatives? And let me ask, do not their persecutors also receive the smiles of an approving conscience? Do they not feel that they are doing righteously in maintaining their national government? Where then is their punishment for their wickedness? Now this is but one of a thousand similar examples which might be mentioned. And does not this prove beyond all controversy that no perfect retribution takes place in these instances?

2. You believe the scriptures are a safe and sufficient guide of faith and practice. You deem it a sacred duty to

study them with boldness, and to receive their instructions as everlasting truth. You contend that this is a privilege which no one can innocently neglect, and a right which no one can take from you without guilt. Now you know that the Inquisition has existed in some Catholic countries. You know that those who dared to differ from their church in matters of opinion have been called to account. They have been tortured in every mode which the ingenuity of man could invent. The horrors and cruelties and torments which the innocent victims have suffered, no tongue can tell, no language describe, no imagination paint. Eternity alone can reveal all the inhuman barbarities of the infernal inquisitors. Now why have christians been so severely punished? For performing what you call an important duty. For searching the scriptures; for believing the Savior; for worshipping God according to the dictates of their own minds; for speaking the honest convictions of their own hearts; for doing right to the best of their abilities and to the extent of their knowledge. And is this rewarding them according to their deeds? You will aver that the approbation of their own minds is of more value than life. True. But will this remove the pains of the rack; the loss of liberty and family and friends; the miseries of imprisonment, and the excruciating agonies of a mangled and bleeding body? And do not the holy inquisitors receive the same approbation in defending the true religion, supporting the mother church, punishing her apostate children? Surely. This is but one of many similar cases that might be mentioned, but does not this conclusively prove that men are not always rewarded and punished according to their goodness and wickedness in this world?

3. You believe that a knowledge of natural science is productive of the most valuable interests of mankind.

You contend that every philosopher should labor to make as many discoveries and learn as many facts as his time and learning and facilities will permit. You affirm that he who increases the bounds of scientific information deserves well of his country and of the world. Now you know there was once such a man as Galileo. He made many great and important discoveries in astronomy. He proved that the earth revolved round the sun. This fact was not believed by the learned or the ignorant. For proclaiming this truth he was imprisoned a year, and then released on the condition of taking an oath that he had renounced these opinions as erroneous. He was afterwards punished again for the same offence, and his death was doubtless hastened by the confinement and cruelties he experienced. And why was all this punishment inflicted? Simply because he performed a duty of the highest importance. Simply because he proclaimed truths of immense value. And was his happiness as great as his merits deserved? Did he suffer no more than his sins demanded? He received the approbation of his own mind. So did his persecutors; for they believed they were doing right, defending the true religion, upholding the word of God. This is but one of many similar occurrences. But is not this sufficient to convince any man that a perfect retribution does not take place in such instances?

4. Take a general survey of mankind in all ages and nations. You find that in many periods and places, the wise and good have been forsaken, abused, despised, tortured in a variety of modes, and murdered in many ways. You learn that the morally corrupt, the thoroughly depraved, the greatest murderers have oftentimes been the greatest favorites with the people, the most flattered and honored and rewarded. You observe that what has been accounted truth and virtue in one gener-

ation or in one region has been pronounced error and vice among other tribes or in other sections. Public opinion is constantly changing. In some parts of our own country the duelist is honored, while in others he is despised. Examples to illustrate these positions might be selected almost without number. I have however said enough to show that human happiness and misery depend much on the circumstances in which individuals are placed. And can retribution be perfect when the good are punished and the bad rewarded? Surely not. The facts then to which I have barely alluded fully prove that the righteous are not always and fully rewarded, and that the wicked are not always and fully punished. I think no one will feel disposed to deny this conclusion.

What then is the testimony of the unequal operation of circumstances on the question in controversy? You have seen that the patriot, the reformer, the philosopher and the philanthropist are frequently doomed to suffer indescribable torments on account of their very obedience to the laws of their creator. Consequently no perfect retribution in these instances takes place in the present existence. Is not my fourth argument perfectly unanswerable?

V. My fifth argument for believing that no perfect retribution takes place in this world, is drawn from the history of mankind. I could select hundreds of cases from the pages of authentic records, which clearly prove that the innocent are frequently subjected to indescribable sufferings, and that the guilty are favored with all the means of temporal prosperity and enjoyment. I could quote thousands of instances in which every candid mind must confess that the penalty was not proportioned to the crime, nor the reward to the merits of the individuals. I prefer however to suppose some probable

examples, since my limits will permit me to illustrate but a few particulars.

1. Three men of the same standing and character agree together to commit a robbery and share the spoils. They station themselves in an obscure retreat and listen with impatient anxiety for the sound of footsteps. At length the stillness of night is disturbed by the tread of a horse. The oldest robber seizes the reins and is shot dead upon the spot. The youngest levels the traveller with his rifle; and the two survivors divide the plunder. The second is now detected and brought to justice. The other lives thirty years in great mental agony, and at last leaves the world in a most unhappy state of mind. Now was the punishment of these three individuals equal? They were equally guilty in the intention. You cannot call death itself any punishment, for it is what all must pass through; and sudden death by shooting must be much less painful than a lingering termination of life. All being of the same character experience the same degree of uneasiness in making preparations for the commission of the crime. If then the oldest robber is made happy the first moment he enters the next conscious existence he suffers no punishment whatever in consequence of his participation in this horrid transaction. The second is imprisoned for several months. His reputation is at once ruined. His family and friends are disgraced and made wretched by his iniquity. He is tried before an assembled multitude and condemned to be hung. A few weeks are given him to make his peace with heaven, and then he is suddenly launched into eternity. Here then is the punishment of his own conscience, his confinement, his trial, his disgrace, his agonized relatives and his public execution; and you will admit that all this amounts to no small degree of torment. Did he not suffer infinitely more than the first

criminal? The third indeed escapes human penalties. But he becomes awakened to a realizing sense of his sinfulness. He has not resolution and moral courage to make confession or to effect a thorough reformation in his character. He lives from year to year in the greatest agony, afraid of every thing, even his own shadow, his sleep disturbed by the most frightful dreams, his days spent in depression and self condemnation, goaded by the tormenting stings of a violated conscience, and in this miserable state descends to the grave. How will his punishment compare with that of the others? Surely you will not have the effrontery to pretend that these three were punished exactly according to their wickedness. It is impossible. Neither will you pretend that this is an improbable supposition. For cases not very dissimilar have repeatedly occurred. Look at the Salem tragedy. The assassin by his own act removed himself from human justice to heavenly felicity. The others passed many miserable days and nights before their release. All such facts must prove to the satisfaction of candid minds that your doctrine of a perfect earthly retribution has no foundation in truth. To return any plausible answer to such statements is not possible.

2. Look into society. You behold a victim of intemperance. The habit of excessive drinking has been gradually and almost insensibly formed. He has become a thorough slave to his appetite. This seems to be his only sin. He is a man of firm integrity, of rigid honesty, of great benevolence, and even of strong devotional feelings. You know whom I mean. Now notice his punishment. It is severe in the extreme. He is unfitted for business. He has lost all employment. His property is gone. He has a most interesting family whom he tenderly loves. His children cannot receive those literary advantages which he meant to have

furnished. He feels his degradation most sensibly. His conscience torments him most severely at every interval of soberness. He sees nothing but ruin and wretchedness for himself and family in the present world. He is troubled with fearful forebodings of the future. Can you imagine a more severe retribution? Now look at his neighbor. This is the man who has furnished the poison which has produced the dreadful calamity. He urged him to drink in his store. He trusted him to whatever quantities he might request. He took a mortgage of his small place and humble dwelling, and has now taken them into his own possession. He has also received the little remains of his property, and put all in safe keeping. He is serving others in the same manner. He has no regard to truth and honesty in any of his transactions any further than they will promote his present pecuniary interests. He is profane and corrupt, given to many secret vices. And during all this time, while his riches are greatly increased, his influence on account of his wealth extended, and even temporal advantage and convenience multiplied, he is generally free from the compunctions of conscience. He has become so hardened in iniquity that his crimes give him little or no uneasiness or anxiety. He believes all will fare alike in another world, and experiences no remorse for his disobedience. Now is the punishment of these two individuals proportioned to their wickedness. The drunkard is rendered almost continually wretched by his sin of intemperance. The unprincipled and depraved miser daily enjoys more or less pleasure of a certain kind, unaccompanied by any thing like painful suffering. I do not deny that he is deprived of the happiness of the christian and experiences many temporal disadvantages on account of his criminality. But I think it must appear perfectly evident to all that

the punishment for his numberless crimes is very much lighter than the other receives for his one vice of intemperance. Consequently your doctrine of a perfect earthly retribution is proved erroneous by this supposition; and this is but one of ten thousand similar examples which come under your observation.

3. Take another survey of the world. Here is a young, modest, virtuous female. Her parents are in indigent circumstances. They have given her a decent education, and endeavored to train her up in habits of industry and morality. At a tender age she leaves the parental home and seeks employment in some family in the city. Her prospects appear brightening. At length she is beset by the unprincipled seducer of innocence who moves in a higher rank of life. He flatters, deceives, promises marriage, and finally triumphs over the moral principle of his victim. He then deserts her altogether and is unknown to her by his real name. Her disgrace becomes manifest. She is suddenly dismissed from her situation. She has too much false pride to return to her relatives. And after many cruel struggles and singular adventures she becomes the inmate of the brothel. There she passes a few years of sinfulness and is hurried to the grave by painful and loathsome disease. But this is not all. The unprincipled seducer of innocence plays the same part with several other defenceless girls, and brings them to ruin and destruction in the same manner. During all this period he drowns painful reflections by excessive quantities of stimulating liquors. So that although he is deprived of christian happiness, he suffers very little real remorse and anguish on account of his numerous, aggravated, diabolical crimes; and finally is hurried to the grave by some violent disease which deprives him of the use of his reason. Now make some estimate of the un-

utterable sufferings of some half dozen females in their progress from the commission of crime to the period of their entrance into the abodes of prostitution; then follow them through their short and guilty course to an untimely and miserable death. Can you find language to express the torments they individually suffer? And will you say that the seducer and seduced were punished exactly according to their wickedness? Impossible. Now this is no imaginary supposition. Read the authentic statements in the magdalen reports of New York and you will find many examples much more affecting than I have described. Look into the history of this vice in Europe and you will discover hundreds of instances infinitely more aggravated than I have mentioned. I ask you merely to view such cases with the eye of candor, and then show me in what way punishment is always proportioned to guilt; and also explain how such sinners can look back upon their ruinous practices with satisfaction in a world of purity and holiness? Can any stronger evidence be needed to show the fallacy of your doctrine than the mere mention of such instances?

4. Take one example of a different character. Look at yonder widow. She is in destitute circumstances. She is obliged to struggle with all her powers to procure a bare subsistence for herself and family. She has five children to maintain. And what is her true character? She is a christian in every sense of the word. She worships her Father in heaven in spirit and truth. She submits cheerfully to his will in the various dispensations of life. She is patient in the midst of her manifold trials. She exhibits a proper example in the various relations of life. She endeavors to bring up her offspring in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Ought she not to experience almost uninterrupted happiness on account of her superior goodness? What is the fact? Her reli-

gion does give her great comfort; her righteousness secures much inward satisfaction; but her enjoyment is constantly disturbed by the conduct of others. Her sons fall among vicious companions; they are led on from one step of iniquity to another until they become dissipated and degraded, unfitted for usefulness or respectability, a curse to their widowed mother and a torment to themselves. Her daughters are early married to profligate and cruel husbands. She is neglected by those in whose society she once moved. She knows not from day to day where she shall procure her daily bread. She has not suitable clothing to attend public worship. A thousand cares and anxieties are constantly pressing upon her soul in her abject poverty. Can you say that she is rewarded according to her real goodness? Is her happiness proportioned to her merits? This you will not pretend. Do you doubt the existence of any such instance? Go into the metropolis, visit the minister at large who has done so much in the cause of humanity; ask him if my statement is exaggerated; see if he cannot point you to living instances of a much more affecting character; I will risk the soundness of this argument on the results of your interview. Then to make the contrast, you must select some individual who has acquired a fortune by iniquity; who has quieted his conscience with the deceitful opiate of good resolutions; who is not troubled with any fear of the future; who enjoys all the conveniences and luxuries which wealth can purchase; whose thoughts are pleasantly occupied with his business and his books; who has really no moral principle, and who experiences little or no suffering on account of his sinfulness. Can you say that in these two cases misery is exactly proportioned to wickedness? Will you affirm that happiness is granted in exact accordance with righteousness? The mere mention of the

facts is sufficient to satisfy me that no perfect retribution takes place in the present existence.

What then is the testimony of history on the question in controversy? You have seen that many cases occur in which it is perfectly evident that those equally guilty suffer very different degrees of punishment; and consequently the wicked are not always and equitably and fully punished in this world. You have seen that there are many instances in which the more sinful experience the less wretchedness; and also many examples in which the more virtuous enjoy the less happiness; and consequently there is no perfect retribution in this mortal life. Is not my fifth argument then from the history of mankind perfectly unanswerable?

VI. My sixth argument for believing that no perfect retribution takes place on earth is drawn from the unequal operations of conscience. In what does conscience consist? In two distinct and separate acts of the mind, which I shall call the moral judgment and the moral sense. By the moral judgment I mean our common judgment exercised upon moral subjects. By moral sense I mean that feeling of approbation which we experience when we have done what our judgment pronounced to be right, and that feeling of condemnation which we suffer when we have done what our judgment pronounced to be wrong. This may appear to be a new definition of conscience, but the more you examine its meaning and bring it to the test of facts, the more will you be convinced that it is the correct definition. You will find that it serves to explain all the existing difficulties on this important subject. My limits will permit me to furnish but a few illustrations.

1. Conscience frequently rewards persons for their wickedness and punishes others for their righteousness. Paul persecuted the early christians even unto death.

He verily judged this course to be right. He was rewarded by a feeling of self-approbation. The English church and government persecuted our forefathers. They wished to make them conform to their standard of doctrine and discipline. They judged that coercive measures were right. They were rewarded by a feeling of self-approbation. Our forefathers took up their residence on these shores. They extirpated the indians, banished the baptists, murdered the quakers, hung the supposed witches. They supposed this was the right course. They were rewarded with a feeling of self-approbation. The same might be truly said of every sincere religious or political persecutor. Look into the christian church. You may see christians engaging in practices which are absolutely wrong; practices which are condemned by the plainest commands of the gospel, and which they would be unwilling others should do towards themselves. And for their performance they are rewarded by conscience; they experience a feeling of self-approbation. Why so? Because they think such proceedings are right and beneficial. If you extend your view to heathen nations, you may find numerous examples of the same description. You see the hindoo wife throw herself upon the burning funeral pile of her husband, and the hindoo parent expose to death his sickly infant and aged parents. And for all such acts they are rewarded with a feeling of self-approbation, because they consider them righteous. Consequently if persons are rewarded for doing wrong, as you perceive is often the case, then no perfect retribution takes place on earth. Not only so. Conscience also frequently punishes a person for his righteousness. Adam Clarke was making fine progress in the acquisition of useful knowledge. He was convinced that this was a wrong course. He asked God's forgiveness of his sinfulness. He vowed to give

up human learning altogether. So long as he judged the course he had pursued to be wrong he was punished by his conscience, by a feeling of self-condemnation. So you may find a thousand cases in which persons do something which is right in itself; but they believe it to be wrong; and consequently are punished with a feeling of self-reproach until they are convinced to the contrary. If then conscience sometimes punishes for doing righteously, there can be no perfect earthly retribution. I see not how any one can deny these facts or dispute this conclusion.

2. Conscience becomes deadened by wickedness. Here is a young man who received a christian education. He was thrown into the society of the thoughtless and unprincipled. For a time he resisted all their solicitations to vice. At length he yielded. For many days he was made miserable by his conscience because he used one profane expression, because he spent one evening at the gaming table, because he once became intoxicated. But now cursing and swearing are his common language, gambling is his occupation, drunkenness is almost a daily fashion. And he has little or no trouble from within. He experienced more torment in one hour when he commenced his downward career than he now suffers in one year. This is the history of thousands and tens of thousands according to their own confessions. Many of the most depraved wretches have made similar statements concerning their course of iniquity after they were condemned to the gallows. Many who have been converted to the gospel have also testified to the same truths concerning themselves. John Newton declares that he did not suffer from the compunctions of conscience during his irreligious and dissolute years. And you may find many christians who engage in the slave trade, warfare and other iniquitous

practices without the least uneasiness. Many instances might be related did my limits permit. No one will deny the truth of these statements. It is an acknowledged truth that conscience becomes seared by crime. How will you dispose of this argument? If conscience punished the offender sufficiently at the beginning of his career, it did not punish him sufficiently when he became hardened in transgression. If it punished him sufficiently when he became inured to wickedness, it did not punish him equitably when he commenced his downward march to destruction. In either case the evidence is conclusive against a perfect earthly retribution.

3. The operations of conscience depend upon the moral sensibility. Observe your neighbor's wife. She endeavors to be a real christian. She aims to perform every duty with fidelity. She understands the divine commands in all their spirituality and extent. She daily falls short of her wishes. She daily compares herself with the gospel standard. A vain thought has been indulged; an improper motive has operated; an unfriendly feeling has been tolerated; an unkind word has been spoken; some benevolent deed has been omitted; but little progress in the divine life has been effected; these and similar charges are found against herself; and they occasion the unceasing reproaches of her conscience; her life is rendered in no small degree unhappy. Now you know that this lady represents a large class of believers Is she rewarded and punished according to her deeds? Then there is her husband. He means to be a follower of Jesus. He attends church and reads a chapter in the bible on Sunday. He presents his children at the baptismal font and appears himself at communion table. He means to do about what is right. But an occasional overreaching in a bargain; a few passionate exclamations; a little slander of his rival; a

common neglect of his secret devotions, and many other sins of omission and commission give him no uneasiness; occasion scarcely a sting of conscience from one year's end to another. Now you know there are many in every religious denomination of this description. Are they rewarded and punished according to their deeds? If conscience punishes this wife more than she deserves, it does not punish her husband so much as his greater negligences demand; if it punishes the husband in exact proportion to his sinfulness, then it inflicts more punishment upon the wife than her iniquities require. In either case no perfect retribution takes place, and consequently your belief is proved erroneous.

4. The operations of conscience depend on a knowledge of duty. You see an individual join the church. He is really sincere in his public profession. He means to obey the christian commands. But he is repeatedly guilty of disobedience. His friends notice his deviations from the path of rectitude. They speak to him in a friendly manner on the subject. He is not conscious of having done any thing unchristian, so limited is his acquaintance with the requisitions of the gospel; and consequently he has experienced no compunction of conscience. After a few years he learns more of the spirit of his holy religion. He sees many instances in which he violated the divine precepts; he notices many omissions of important virtues; and he regrets his sins of omission and commission with great feeling. This is the experience of almost every real christian. And does conscience always punish according to the real character? Not only so. You know many of our political office seekers. They mean to be worthy disciples of the Savior. They belong to the different denominations of believers. They are perhaps as correct

in most things as their brethren. But in order to obtain promotion to office and to retain their posts of honor and emolument, they are frequently guilty of artifices, manœuvres, subterfuges, changes in opinion and conduct, which are not tolerated in the christian code. The same proceedings in any other concerns of life they would condemn without a moment's hesitation. They manifest a want of political integrity, and in very many instances their course deserves no better name than moral obliquity. But for all this they do not seem to experience any great compunctions of conscience. They do not consider that there is a right and a wrong in every thing. Their knowledge of duty is limited. When convinced of this they are doubtless more or less troubled with remorse and anguish. Can you say then that they are rewarded according to their deeds? As the operations of conscience depend so much on a proper understanding of the laws of your nature, there can be no perfect retribution in this world.

What then is the testimony of conscience on the question in controversy? You have seen that conscience sometimes rewards for wickedness and sometimes punishes for righteouness. You have seen that she often becomes deadened through the influence of crime, and that her operations depend much on the moral sensibility and enlightened understanding of the individual. Consequently she cannot render unto every man according to his deeds. Is not my sixth argument unanswerable?

But, my dear Sir, I must draw my long epistle to a close. The arguments I have imperfectly illustrated are but a mere specimen of what might be stated did my limits permit. If what I have said should convince you that even in one instance, either the sinner was not sufficiently punished, or the righteous not fully rewarded,

or that the same deed had not received the same penalty or benefit in different individuals, my cause is gained. I trust however the facts I have advanced must convince every candid mind that the righteous are not always and equitably and fully rewarded on earth; and that the wicked are not always and equitably and fully punished in the present existence. If you are not satisfied with this conclusion on the first perusal of what I have written, I beseech you to read over again the separate arguments, and determine in your own mind as in the presence of an omniscient judge, whether you can furnish any fair answer to the evidence in a single instance. If you will pursue this truly honest and independent course I have no fear of the results; for I cannot see any way in which a person who is governed by preponderating proofs can resist this testimony of undisputed facts. And what is the legitimate inference from my conclusion? Simply this. If there is not a perfect retribution in this world, there must be rewards and punishments beyond the grave, or God is not a being of infinite justice. Can the justness of this inference be avoided?

LETTER III.

My Dear Sir,

You believe there will be no retribution beyond the grave for the conduct of the present life. You believe that the righteous will not be rewarded hereafter by the righteousness which they have here acquired. You believe the wicked will not be punished hereafter by the wickedness which they have here committed. You believe the future condition of mankind will not be effected by the characters which they have here formed. Now I consider your belief on this question thoroughly erroneous. I contend that there will be a future righteous retribution. I believe the righteous will be made happy hereafter by the righteousness which they have here acquired. I believe the wicked will be rendered miserable hereafter by the wickedness which they have here committed. I believe a perfectly just and equitable distribution of rewards and punishments will take place hereafter according to the deeds done in the body. In proof of the truth of this belief I now appeal to your common sense. My limits will permit me to notice but a few of the most common arguments of reason.

I. My first argument for a future retribution is drawn from the common consent of mankind.

1. Suppose mankind had generally believed that there would be no future retribution. Suppose they had believed that all would be made happy at their entrance upon the next conscious existence. Suppose this had been the belief of the savage and the civilized, the ignorant and the learned, the heathen and the mahometan and the jew. Above all suppose that christians from the days of the apostles to the present hour had defended this faith? Would you not affirm that this common opinion of all ages and nations presented a very strong argument in favor of the doctrine of no future retribution? To this question you will surely return an affirmative answer.

Not only so. Suppose a new sect had arisen within the present century who denied the correctness of this common belief. Suppose they contended that a perfect retribution did not take place in the present world. Suppose they also believed that the consequences of our present conduct would extend to the next existence; and that every individual would hereafter be treated precisely according to the character here acquired. Suppose they defended a just and equitable distribution of rewards and punishments. Suppose the members of this party were few in comparison with the whole body of christians, were principally confined to this country, were no way superior to their neighbors either in sound learning, or theological attainments, or examination of the scriptures, or christian character. Should you say that the belief of the new denomination presented any serious objection to the argument above stated? The honest convictions of your mind must return a negative answer to this question.

2. Now, my dear sir, make an application of this

illustration. I state a fact which you will not dispute. The great majority of human beings in every age and country and religion have believed that no perfect retribution took place on earth. This has been the common opinion of the barbarous and the uncivilized, of the enlightened and refined, of the depraved and wicked, of the virtuous and holy, of the unbeliever and misbeliever. Above all this has been the unanimous sentiment of christians till within a short period. Now why have so many embraced this faith? Because they were so taught in childhood? No. Because they arrived at this conclusion by reasoning? No. Because it constituted an article in their religious creed? No. From what source then have they derived this belief? From their own observation? Yes. They have seen the wicked prospered. They have seen the righteous depressed. They have seen the guilty rewarded. They have seen the innocent punished. They have seen an unequal distribution of the means of improvement and enjoyment. They have seen that happiness was not proportioned according to the goodness of individuals; and that misery was not allotted according to transgression. Above all the follower of Moses and Jesus has read in the records of a divine revelation, that some were not dealt with according to their iniquities. And is not the evidence satisfactory which is derived from our own experience, our own observation, our own bible? Does not this common consent of mankind furnish a strong argument against your doctrine of a perfect earthly retribution? Surely your honesty will compel you to return an affirmative answer to this question.

But this is not all. You know that most of the human family have hoped for a future existence. You know they have also believed in future rewards and punishments. This is the undisputed fact in relation to the

great majority of every nation, in every period, in every country and under every religion. Above all you know that christians, with scarcely an exception from the ascension of our Savior till the beginning of the present century, have believed in a future righteous retribution. Now from what source has this belief been so generally derived? From nature? If so it must be true; for nature when properly interpreted teaches no falsehoods. From instinct? If so it must be true; for the author of instinct is the living fountain of wisdom. From an early revelation? If so it must be true; for revelation can proceed from none but the omniscient. From the gospel? If so it must be true; for Jesus came to bear witness to the truth. From the conclusions of reason? Yes; and can mankind have been so long and so universally deceived by sophistry? From common sense? Yes; and has common sense always and uniformly led her votaries astray on this important question? Is not this common belief of mankind then a powerful argument in proof of a future righteous retribution? In proof of this conclusion I appeal to the common sense of unprejudiced christians.

But a sect has arisen within the present century who deny the truth of both my conclusions. They contend that a perfect retribution takes place on earth, and that there will be no rewards and punishments beyond the grave for the deeds done in the body. Their number is very small in comparison with the whole denomination of christians. They are principally confined to our country. They are no way superior to their brethren, either in their talents, knowledge, industry, application, research, wisdom, goodness or piety. Now from what source have they derived their opinions? From observation? If so let them name the facts which prove that every man is rewarded or punished according to his obedience

or transgression in this world. From the gospel? If so let them show one passage which teaches that the future condition of mankind will not be affected by their present character. This has never been done. Can you say that the belief of this new and small denomination furnishes any serious objection to the argument from the common consent of mankind? Let your answer to this question be formed by the same rule which would dictate your reply if the facts were of a directly opposite character. Then you must admit that my conclusion is not essentially affected by the small numbers either in ancient or modern times who dissented from the common judgment of the world.

II. My second argument for a future retribution is drawn from the impartiality of the Creator.

1. You know a father who has three sons. The first obeys his commands, regards his wishes, devotes himself to the family interests, and manifests filial and fraternal affection. The second is neither very good nor very bad, reviles his authority when his inclinations prompt, wounds his feelings when his passions rebel, furnishes but little aid to his temporal and spiritual progress, and cares no great for domestic peace and prosperity. The third becomes dissipated and abandoned, a nuisance in society, a torment to his friends, a curse to himself. The parent makes his will, and gives to the youngest son fifty thousand, to the middle one five hundred, and to the eldest nothing. Do you not call this gross partiality? Is this an equitable distribution of his property? Has he shown any attention to their just deserts? Can you longer give him your respect and esteem? Has he not violated the best principles of humanity? I appeal to your sense of right and wrong.

Now you know that mankind are depraved in a greater or less degree. Many have abused their nature, their

education, their privileges, their religion, and become exceeding sinful. Many have obeyed the divine laws, avoided vice, cultivated holiness, and formed christian characters. Now suppose your Father should take one half to heaven, and send the remainder to an endless hell, without any special regard to their obedience or transgression in his election. Would you not call this gross partiality? Would you consider this an equitable distribution of his favors? Could you longer respect his name? Could you love him even if you were one of the favorites? No. This is not in human nature. There is a sense of justice implanted in your bosom. You can distinguish between right and wrong. You cannot call that goodness in one being which you would consider wickedness in yourself. You would say that an all perfect Creator is bound to deal out his gifts with an impartial affection; that he must necessarily distribute his rewards and punishments eventually, precisely according to the merits of every individual. Is not this the fact?

2. Now make an application of this illustration. Your creator has placed his human family on this earth without their knowledge or consent. He has endowed you with reason to discover the path of duty and happiness, and the course of sin and misery. He has given you moral freedom to walk in one and shun the other. He has not furnished you with equal advantages for improvement and happiness. Some are doomed to live in utter ignorance, while others are favored with the best advantages for the acquisition of knowledge. Some are oppressed with slavery, while others enjoy unlimited liberty. Some are dwelling in heathen darkness, while others are blessed with the light of the everlasting gospel. Some improve their privileges to their own increase in wisdom and goodness and happiness, while others

abuse theirs to the injury of their bodies and souls. Rewards and punishments are not always equitably distributed, because the moral governor does not interfere to remedy the defects of his general laws. This has been satisfactorily proved in my last communication. Such you will admit is the condition of the human family.

Now the Father who gave us this life has promised to give us another. We call this gift an unspeakable blessing. Suppose however he should place the whole family on a perfect equality at the commencement of our new existence. Suppose he should admit every individual to his heavenly kingdom, and make all equally pure and holy and happy. Would this compensate for the inequalities of this world? Would this rectify the unequal advantages and unequal retribution of this mortal life? Would this be dealing with every child according to his use or abuse of his powers and opportunities? Surely not. If then he should establish this equality, must you not admit that partiality has been shown to individuals and nations? Does not this destroy the strict impartiality of his character? Could you give him your confidence any more because he exercised election this side the grave, than you could if it was exercised in relation to the future? Is not the principle the same? In my mind there is no difference. If he may show partiality in one instance, and for a short period without any remedy, on the same grounds he may show partiality in many instances and for eternity. But when you are assured that an all perfect Being can see the beginning from the end, and that he will rectify in the next state the inequalities of this, your mind is at ease. All difficulty vanishes. Your love returns. Your confidence is confirmed. You have no fear that an impartial parent will ever suffer the guilty to escape

the just consequences of their wickedness, or permit his obedient offspring to lose their just rewards. Consequently a future righteous retribution is absolutely necessary to vindicate from *partialism* the character of your Creator.

Do you doubt the soundness of this conclusion? Let me give one example to render it more evident. You have read of Nero. He was a monster in human form. He ordered his own mother to be murdered. He killed his own wife. He set fire to the city of Rome and thus made thousands wretched. He persecuted the early christians in the most cruel and barbarous manner. No language can describe, no words can recount the inhuman and wicked acts of his life. About the same period there lived one Paul. He went from place to place preaching the gospel. He converted thousands from idolatry and sinfulness to the worship and service of the universal Father. He gave instruction to the ignorant, advice to the doubting, reproof to the erring, consolation to the afflicted. He filled many souls with gladness. And during all this time, he was calumniated and persecuted; he was exposed to sufferings the most intense; he experienced trials the most severe; he even laid down his life in the promotion of human happiness. Now would it be justice to place these two persons on an equality when they enter the next existence? Let the honest feelings of your heart answer. Nay, I appeal with confidence to the experience of every individual in every age and country in support of my position. Is there one of the number who has taken an extensive and minute survey of the condition and character and enjoyment of individuals and nations who has not inwardly uttered the following exclamations? "The inequalities of the present life cannot be reconciled with the justice of God. If he is an impartial parent there must be a future ret-

ribution. A partial Father I cannot love; and nothing but a righteous and equitable distribution of rewards and punishments beyond the grave can establish his impartiality."

III. My third argument for a future retribution is drawn from the memory of man.

1. Do you not, my dear sir, sometimes review the transactions of your past life? Do you not call to mind the good motives you have cherished, the good dispositions you have cultivated, the good deeds you have performed? Do you not recollect your success in resisting temptations, in reforming improper habits, in subduing rebellious passions, in acquiring religious knowledge, in obtaining christian holiness? And does not the remembrance of your praiseworthy exertions afford you happiness? Yes; you will surely answer this question in the affirmative.

On the other hand, do you not occasionally notice the faults and transgressions of which you have been guilty? Do you not recall some excesses of appetite, some outbreakings of passion, some unsubmissive tempers, some unkind feelings, some idle and injurious words, some neglect of religious opportunities? And does not the remembrance of your deficiencies and transgressions give you misery? Surely you will again return an affirmative answer. *Remembrance then rewards you for righteousness and punishes you for wickedness.* In proof of this conclusion I appeal with perfect confidence to the experience of every man who has endeavored to be a practical christian.

2. Your friend was early instructed in the truths and duties of the gospel. He left the paternal roof at a tender age. He associated with dissolute companions. He learned the language of profaneness and obscenity. He wasted his leisure hours and his little income at the

gaming table. He acquired a love for intoxicating liquors. He became dissipated, and spent some precious years in the service of sinfulness. All hope of reformation vanished. Before the age of thirty a striking providence aroused him to consideration. He reviewed his iniquitous course, and meditated on his future prospects. The image of his departed parents arose to his imagination, and their concern for his welfare, their prayers and entreaties and instructions rushed on his recollection. He saw nothing but certain destruction and an untimely grave before him. Relying upon divine assistance he resolved upon amendment. He commenced in earnest the work of reformation. For several years he has been a consistent and zealous christian. He seeks no concealment for his former iniquities. He warns the young to avoid the rocks on which he was wrecked. He sincerely laments his past wickedness. Does not a remembrance of his youthful sins give him misery? Certainly; every man will admit the truth of this conclusion. It is confirmed by scripture.

On the contrary, does he not often call to mind the dispensation of providence which brought him to reflection? Does he not rejoice that the infant lessons of parental piety were early impressed upon his susceptible heart? Does he not feel grateful that he has been enabled to carry his virtuous resolutions into execution? Does he not recollect his manly struggles in shaking off his unprincipled associates, in denying his craving and vitiated appetites, in conquering his low and grovelling propensities, in elevating his debased affections? Does he not exult in his success in forming moral habits, in cultivating purity of heart, in obtaining devotional feelings, and in securing the christian character? Does not a remembrance of his triumphant victory over sinfulness give him great happiness? Most assuredly.

Memory then punishes him for his wickedness and rewards him for his righteousness. In proof of this conclusion I appeal with perfect confidence to the experience of every christian whose youthful years were spent in dissipation.

3. I was intimately acquainted with a female christian. She manifested the scriptural evidence of a true and sincere and advanced disciple. Her life was threatened by a lingering disease. All expectation of recovery was banished from her mind for several months before her dissolution. Every day I spent hours in her presence. She looked upon the approaching event with perfect calmness. She was patient under her various sufferings. Her spirits were continually cheerful. The idea of being so early separated from the friend of her youth and the children of her affection and her prayers would occasionally produce a tear. But her resignation was complete. And what gave her this support and comfort? Several particulars which I will mention. She took a review of her past life. Although she could discover enough in her deficiencies and transgressions to produce true humility, yet there was nothing to create remorse or anguish. She had conscientiously endeavored to fulfil all her incumbent duties. She had acquired the graces and virtues of the gospel in a high degree. She had taken great satisfaction in all the exercises of piety and holiness. She loathed sin in all its forms, and hungered and thirsted after righteousness. Her soul was in a religious and happy frame. She felt prepared to unite with the ransomed of the Lord in the pleasures and employments of heaven. She had a firm and unshaken confidence in her unchangeable Father and friend. She knew he would never desert nor forsake those who gave themselves to his service. She had no fears of meeting him whom she loved more than all things else. She had venerated her Savior. She

had studied and imitated his character. She desired to be with him and enjoy his society and affection. She made all necessary arrangements for her burial. She prayed for assistance to pass properly through the trying scene of separation and death. In the language of her Savior she commended her soul to the hands of her ever-present Father and gently bid adieu to all earthly concerns. Is this reality or is it imagination? It is the literal truth. There is no deception in this instance. *The remembrance of her christian life and principles gave her comfort and strength and joy in the trying scenes of sickness and dissolution.*

On the other hand, I have stood beside the bed of the dying awakened sinner. Soon after I commenced preaching, before my settlement in the ministry, it was my unpleasant lot to be invited to visit an abandoned female in the near prospect of death. She had been more than once a mother, though never married. She had lived a profligate and wicked life. She was now awakened to a sense of her sinfulness and her danger. She suffered the most intense mental agony. She wanted me to do something for her relief, to offer prayer, to administer baptism, to find some cordial for her agonized soul. My experience in pastoral duties was small. My feelings were overcome. I had never witnessed or imagined any thing of the kind. I said every thing my conscience would permit. I spoke of the unchangeable love of a universal Father. I described the compassionate and benevolent feelings of the common Savior. I alluded to the cordial reception of the repentant and returning prodigal. I exhorted her to unfeigned repentance, and a confiding faith in her divine Master. I offered the most fervent petitions for her forgiveness and acceptance. All this produced but little effect upon her troubled and self-condemned spirit. The very mentioning of infinite

goodness and mercy, of a dying and crucified and risen redeemer, seemed to increase her distress. For it reminded her of her base ingratitude, her wilful neglect, her aggravated disobedience. All the sins of her dissolute course seemed to have taken possession of her thoughts. Nothing that I was able to advance gave any real relief. She continued in this dreadful state a day and a half, and was then ushered into eternity. The scene is too deeply engraved on my mind ever to be effaced. Now what produced this indescribable misery? *Remembrance of her past sinfulness.* Yes; in the eventful hours of sickness and death, *memory severely punishes the wicked and richly rewards the righteous.* In proof of the truth of this conclusion I appeal with confidence to the experience of every advanced christian minister.

3. Now, my dear sir, make an application of this argument. Let this unhappy female enter upon the next conscious existence. In order to constitute her the same person she must have a remembrance of her former life. And will it give her happiness to recollect her vile practices, her sinful indulgences, her pernicious example, her debasing influence? Will it give her happiness to recollect her neglected duties, her wasted time, her abused privileges, her slighted mercies? Will it give her happiness to recollect her disregard of her Savior and her disobedience of her Father? Will not the recollection of her loathsome vices, her aggravated depravity, her infernal wickedness fill her soul with remorse and dismay, tribulation and anguish? How can the case be otherwise? Will she not realize more sensibly the deformity of sin, the guilt of transgression, the degradation of her rational and immortal nature? What then can prevent her remembrance of her past iniquities from giving her unutterable torments? I know of nothing.

On the other hand, must not the christian be rewarded

by his remembrance? Is not this idea intimated both by Jesus and his apostles. How must the happiness of the beloved disciple be increased in calling to mind his earthly course, his kind care of the widowed mother of his master, his arduous labors for the salvation of mankind, his resistance of the various temptations to apostacy, his peaceful and benevolent dispositions, his worthy example in all the relations of a man and a minister? And must not every true and obedient believer partake in some good degree of similar enjoyment? Will it not give him delight to review his successful warfare, his glorious triumph over the world, the flesh and the adversary. Yes; *the surviving or renewed memory must hereafter torment the wicked and bless the righteous.* I can discover no other alternative. I know not how this conclusion can be shaken. In proof of its soundness I appeal to the common sense of mankind. This then is my third argument for a future retribution; THE UNDYING MEMORY OF MAN.

But, my dear sir, you know that great efforts have been made to destroy the force of this argument, because it comes home with such power to the conscience of every reflecting individual. Some of the recent attacks upon this insurmountable obstacle to the correctness of your doctrine I will now notice.

1. One objection to this argument is thus stated. If the remembrance of past wickedness punishes one person, it must give more or less punishment to all who have sinned. Many good christians have greatly transgressed the divine laws, and therefore the consequences of their iniquities must extend to the next existence. Certainly. This appears to be the dictate of both reason and revelation. This is the very principle for which I am contending, an equitable and righteous retribution. Let me then illustrate by an example. Suppose for

instance that Judas sincerely repented in his last moments on earth. Suppose that he commenced the next life in the same state of mind in which he departed from this world. Suppose he should press forward in the work of reformation and improvement, until he forms a christian character, and is thus qualified for heavenly felicity, for the society of the other apostles and of their divine master. Now can he forget during this period his former selfishness, and avarice, and dishonesty? Can he forget his mercenary bargain, his thirty pieces of silver, his unparalleled treachery? Can he forget the last supper, the look of his Savior, the sop given and received? Can he forget the hypocritical kiss in the garden and his betraying of innocent blood? And must not the remembrance of his base ingratitude and his cold-blooded depravity diminish his satisfaction, disturb his happiness, and even create painful sensations? Must not such consequences continue for an indefinite period? Surely I know not how this conclusion can be avoided. And must not all men be served according to their characters? This I admit. I believe our Father is no respecter of persons, but that every individual will be rewarded or punished precisely according to his deeds. So long then as I contend that remembrance is to do justice to every class of our fellow men I consider this objection fully answered.

2. A second objection to this argument is thus stated. We forget much of what took place in our early years, and still we are the same persons. Why may we not forget what took place in this world and still retain our identity? For many plain and satisfactory reasons, one or two of which will be sufficient for my present purpose. We do not leap at once from infancy to manhood. Our course is progressive. We make gradual advances in the acquisition of knowledge. New impressions remove

old ones into a dim and darkened distance. Each step is connected with those which precede and follow. So that all change is gradual. Now between death and the next existence there can be no mental advancement, and consequently a person must remember what took place on earth or he is not the same individual. An illustration will make this reasoning plain. Suppose you should arise tomorrow morning in the full exercise of all your powers of body and soul. Suppose however you had no remembrance of having before existed. You knew no person, you had no knowledge of any thing in this world. Could you be called the same individual who went to sleep with a great store of valuable information? Your body would be the same. The powers of your mind so far as the future was concerned would not be altered. But every thing that now constitutes your character and qualifies you for spiritual happiness would be wanting; and consequently your identity would be lost. So must it be with each of us if we are to lose our remembrance of this life in our passage through the grave.

Not only so. A few facts in relation to the powers of memory may convince you that none of our acquisitions are really lost although we may have forgotten them for years. You know that many persons have been drowned and afterwards resuscitated. The experiences of some of this number throw much light on this question. As the man is sinking all the transactions of his past life rush through his mind in rapid succession; many things which he had long since forgotten, the minutest events of his life, every scene in which he had been engaged, in short the picture of his earthly existence is placed before his mental vision, perfect in all its parts. Now this proves that it is in the power of our Father so to operate on the memory that the in-

dividual shall recollect all things he ever knew. This is a fearful thought. This explains the mode in which the secrets of all hearts may hereafter be made manifest. If you have any doubt of the truth of this statement I would refer you to works on mental philosophy; and further than this, I can introduce you to an individual of the first respectability in this vicinity who will substantiate my relation from his own personal experience. Did my limits permit I could adduce many interesting facts of a similar character to illustrate my position. So that I consider this weak objection fully refuted.

3. A third objection is thus stated. We shall have no remembrance hereafter of what took place in this world. My answer to this assertion is contained in one sentence. *If we have no remembrance hereafter of the present life we have no future existence.* The truth of this position I will prove to your full satisfaction. Suppose you could convince me that I am at this moment made up of the very materials which once constituted the soul and body of Adam. Would this satisfy you, either that he was now enjoying a second life, or that I am the first parent of mankind? By no means. You would merely show that the ingredients of humanity which he had long since worn out, were fashioned anew into an unitarian minister. Now suppose your heavenly Father should form a new being from the animal, intellectual and moral nature which you must ere long lay down in death? Suppose this creature should have no more knowledge of having lived once before than you now possess of having enjoyed a former existence. Would he be the identical man to whom these questions are addressed? Is this the kind of immortality you expect? No. The supposition is perfectly absurd. You must have a remembrance of the transactions of this life, or it will no

longer be *you* who receive a future life. And this is true in relation to every individual of the human family. In proof of the truth of this conclusion I appeal to the common sense of mankind.

Not only so. This question is settled beyond all controversy by the resurrection of our Savior. He was raised to an incorruptible and immortal life. His body will never be corrupted. His nature can never suffer death. Now was he not precisely the same person after his resurrection as before his crucifixion? Did he not possess the same mental and moral powers, the same benevolence and piety, the same deep interest in the cause of human salvation? Did he not retain a perfect recollection of his earthly ministry, of his cruel persecutions, of his excruciating sufferings, of his ignominious death? Did he not know his disciples, give them instructions concerning their future course, explain the prophecies to the two with whom he journeyed? Look at the records for yourself. You will soon be satisfied that Jesus experienced no change in his mental or moral character in passing through death. And if raising him to an incorruptible and immortal life did not destroy his remembrance of his earthly career, neither can our being raised to an immortal and incorruptible existence destroy our remembrance of temporal transactions. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. Here then is an answer to your objection which no believer in revelation will feel disposed to attack.

But this is not all. Our Savior's instructions confirm this conclusion beyond all question. Listen to his own words. "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also. Father I will that they also whom thou hast *given* me be with me where I am; that they may behold

my glory which thou hast given me." Does not this statement decide the controversy? Are the apostles to be hereafter with Jesus? With what Jesus? With the one they followed when on earth, the one they served with fidelity, the one they revered and loved; or with one who had no recollection of any of these circumstances? And what apostles? The very same Peter and James and John who were commissioned to preach glad tidings to all people? Or some other beings of the same name, who never knew Jesus? I need not ask such questions. The same Savior and the same apostles were to renew their intimacy beyond the grave, and no doubt much of their happiness would arise from a recollection of their earthly transactions. Paul encouraged his converts with the same truth. And the instructions of the whole gospel conspire to prove that a *future life* is to be the portion of mankind, and not that a *new creation* is to be made from our worn out natures. No one then can possibly enjoy a second existence without remembering the first. Consequently the undying memory must create a future retribution. There is no possible way of avoiding this conclusion. In proof of its soundness I appeal to the common sense of mankind.

IV. My fourth argument for a future retribution is drawn from the nature of sin and holiness.

1. A christian father has two sons. He endeavors to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He teaches them the existence and paternal character of the universal Father. He makes them acquainted with the history and example and instructions of the common Savior. He explains to them all the duties which they owe themselves, their fellow men, their divine master and their heavenly parent. He persuades them by motives human and divine to cultivate the christian character. He convinces them by a variety of ex-

amples, that they have the power either to rise to a high degree of moral excellence, or sink to a low degree of moral depravity. He makes them understand both from experience and observation that goodness qualifies a person for pure and satisfactory happiness, while wickedness prepares them for severe suffering and wretchedness. He has the satisfaction of seeing them amiable, intelligent and virtuous, the natural result of his great care and attention and prayerfulness. He places them at a proper age in the same business in our metropolis, and leaves them to their moral freedom. And what follows?

The youngest son soon experiences a degree of liberty which he never before enjoyed. He may spend his leisure hours as he pleases. He begins to relish society. He accepts an invitation to attend the theatre. He is delighted with the performances. He feels no compunctions of conscience on this account; for he knows that worthy christians occasionally visit this scene of amusement, and his beloved parents never cautioned him to avoid this place of fashionable resort. He is drawn there a second evening by some brilliant star in the theatrical world. He becomes so much interested that he resolves to spend his little income in attendance upon this "interesting school of morals." Thus far he is not conscious of having deviated from the path of rectitude. He indeed desires that his parents should not know where so much of his leisure is passed. At length he has not funds sufficient to purchase the necessary ticket. He thinks of borrowing of some friend, but concludes to take from the drawer of his master, and keep an exact account so as to return at some future period the principal with interest. All this appears correct, for his intentions are not wrong. His acquaintances however *increase* and he is soon invited to a convivial meeting.

He wishes to accept, but has not the means of defraying his share of the expenses, without borrowing more from his master's drawer. The joke, the story, the song and the wine cause the evening to pass pleasantly and rapidly; and there does not seem to him to be any thing to regret in this mode of enjoyment. He becomes a regular member of the party. On one occasion he takes more of the stimulating drink than he intended. His conscience reproves him most severely for placing himself so clearly in the way of temptation. His companions fear the consequences, and endeavor to convince him that such excesses are not uncommon among some gentlemen of high standing in the community. The wound heals slowly, but is at last plastered over with the deceitful opiate of good resolutions. He becomes more intimate with his associates. They enter into more familiar conversation. Women are mentioned. The sophistry of infidelity is employed. They convince him that he has passions which were given to be gratified; that their gratification is productive of health and attended with pleasure; that certain precautions will prevent any evil results either to himself or others; that there can be no sin in following the dictates of nature. In a state of excitement he is led to a house of moral death. Remorse torments him on the day following. But his thoughts are turned from himself by his business during the day, and his dissipation through the night. He however despises theft, but fears he shall not be soon able to return his borrowed capital. He takes more for the purpose of purchasing lottery tickets. Being unsuccessful here he enters upon other modes of gaming which are ever open in large cities to ruin the unwary. From one thing to another he proceeds until his iniquities are exposed, his character ruined, his constitution shattered, his moral principles abandoned, his habits

immoral, his heart polluted. I need not describe his misery and wretchedness. This is no picture of the imagination. Now let me ask several questions. Was he made wicked by fate, or necessity, or chance, or supernatural influence? No. This you will not pretend. On the contrary was he not a free agent? Did he not possess the power to resist the temptation? Can he justly blame any but himself? Is not his wickedness of his own acquisition? Can he get rid of his depravity in any method but reformation? Does not his sinfulness torment him severely? Is not his suffering increased by the moral purity which prevails in the community? To all these questions you will undoubtedly return an affirmative answer. On these points then we are agreed. Remember this conclusion.

Now the eldest son pursues a different course. He is faithful to the interests of his master. He never knowingly deviates from what he believes to be exactly right in his mercantile transactions. He secures the unbounded confidence of his employer, and the respect and approbation of his customers. He selects virtuous and intelligent and christian associates. He attends regularly upon the ministrations of the gospel. He engages in the instruction of the sunday school. He unites with the associations of young men for mutual improvement and benevolent purposes. He spends his evenings in reading, hearing lectures, and improving social intercourse. He is extensively known and greatly beloved. His sphere of influence is enlarged. He commands the best situations in his line of business, and receives the largest amount of salary. He is rendered happy by his goodness, his consciousness of having done right, his progress in mental and moral improvement, his well-disciplined passions, his expansive benevolence, his ardent piety, his truly christian character. And

here again I would ask several questions. Was he made good by any fate, or chance, or miracle? No. This you will not pretend. Was he not a free agent? Could he not have gone astray if he had pleased? Can he lose his moral excellence without his own consent and exertions? Is not his holiness of his own acquisition? Does it not qualify him for high degrees of felicity? Is not his enjoyment increased by the virtues of the community in which he resides? To all these questions you will also return an affirmative answer. On these points then we do not disagree. Now what are the two conclusions at which we have arrived? In the first place, we have settled these questions; whatever wickedness any man may possess has been acquired by his own free agency; the more perfectly christian the community in which he resides the greater must be his misery arising from his sinfulness. In the second place, we have also established these positions; whatever goodness any man possesses has been acquired by his own free agency; the more perfectly christian the community in which he lives the greater must be his happiness arising from his holiness.

2. Now, my dear sir, let us proceed one step further. Suppose that these two sons should enter the next existence with the very character I have described. Would not the youngest necessarily suffer greater torments than he ever experienced on earth? Would he not be removed from all those occupations and indulgences which served to prevent unceasing anguish in this world? Would he not be in a region of greater moral purity? Would he not be wholly unfitted for the enjoyments and employments of a heavenly inheritance? Could he heartily unite in the worship of that Father whom he had neglected and disobeyed? Could he delight in the society of that Savior whom he had slighted and denied?

Could he mingle in the joys of those pure souls whom he had ridiculed and despised? Must not his depraved inclinations, desires, passions, affections, habits of feeling and thinking greatly increase his suffering? It cannot be otherwise. This you will admit must be the natural and unavoidable consequence of his sinfulness, provided he enters the future state with the character he here formed.

On the contrary must not the oldest son enjoy greater happiness than he ever experienced on earth? Would he not be removed beyond the reach of all those perplexities and imperfections which prevented his goodness from producing uninterrupted enjoyment? Would he not be in a state more congenial to his holy desires and longings? Would he not be qualified for the enjoyments and glories of the spiritual kingdom? Would he not delight in the society of just men made perfect, of the innumerable company of angels, of Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and of the one universal Father? Most assuredly. This you will also admit, provided he enters the next existence with the character which he formed on earth. Here again we arrive at other very important conclusions. In the first place it is settled, that if the sinner enters the next existence with the same character which he here acquired, his sinfulness must necessarily render him more wretched than it possibly could in this world. And in the second place we have determined, that if the righteous enters the next life with the character which he formed on earth, his holiness must necessarily qualify him for greater felicity than it could possibly yield him in the present existence. Thus far we are agreed.

3. Now, my dear sir, let us come to the application of these conclusions. An all important question arises. Shall we enter the next existence with the same moral

characters which we have formed in this world? Most assuredly. I have no hesitation in returning an affirmative answer to this inquiry. And I will now endeavor to establish my position with a few plain and satisfactory arguments. In the first place, we cannot retain our personal identity unless we retain our moral character. Revelation and reason assure us that we shall retain our identity; that it is *we ourselves* who are now conversing, who are to enjoy a second existence. And what now constitutes ourselves? Our hands and feet, our tongue and limbs, our body? No. This is but the instrument which we use for our gratification. We ourselves think, reason, judge, love, hate, suffer and enjoy; and the results of these mental and moral operations form our character. Now take away all these characteristics and you remove our characters; you remove ourselves; you leave nothing but infant souls; we are not then the same beings; in losing all that constitutes our present character we lose our identity. Now let me apply this to the younger son. Take away all his knowledge, so that his remembrance of the instructions he disobeyed and the iniquities he committed can give him no suffering. Take away his habits of thinking and feeling, so that his perverted will and affections may cause him no misery. Take away his sinful desires and dispositions, so that his undisciplined passions and debased tastes may not create any wretchedness. Take away his power of judging between right and wrong, and his moral sense which approves the former and condemns the latter, so that his conscience can occasion no torment. Take away these and other particulars and you have indeed removed the sinfulness which he acquired. But what have you left? Nothing that made him the person described. You leave him a mere infant, without any moral character whatever. Is this infant the same individual

mentioned? By no means. Consequently you cannot remove his character, all that makes the man, without destroying his personal identity. But we have already seen that depravity cannot be taken away except by reformation, and that this must be the work of a free agent. You make him a new creature altogether; and have we not seen that you cannot destroy the habits a person has acquired without his own consent and cooperation? Consequently no one can lose his character in passing through the grave without losing his identity. Unless we retain our characters *we* shall not receive a future existence. In proof of this conclusion I appeal to your common sense.

In the second place, it is also a settled question that no one can enjoy heavenly happiness without holiness. This is the declaration of scripture and the dictate of reason. This you admit. Well, suppose you could remove all wickedness from the sinner and leave him the same person, how could you furnish him with the holiness necessary for spiritual felicity? What is holiness? It is nothing more nor less than a christian character which the individual acquires by his own exertions. Consequently this is an acquisition of free human agency. Now can this be imparted by miracle? By no means. Why? Because it is the result of a man's own voluntary labors and exertions. The scriptures assure us that God *cannot* lie. Why not? Because falsehood is directly contrary to his pure and holy nature. In the same way, I affirm that God *cannot* make a man holy by miracle. Why not? Because holiness consists in certain habits of thinking and feeling and willing and loving and acting, which habits the human being must himself form by frequent repetitions. Consequently no miraculous agency can make the soul form habits at one mental operation which requires freedom of choice and

many successive repetitions. We have seen before that goodness is acquired by personal and active exertions. I consider it fairly proved then that no man can ever be made holy by a miracle, and of course that the wicked can never be fitted for heaven without their own consent and endeavors.

In the third place, the example of our Savior fully proves that we shall enter the next existence with the same characters which we have here formed. He acquired a christian character by his own personal exertions. He was tempted in all points as we are and yet resisted in every instance. He lived a sinless life. His holiness was the result of his own free choice and arduous labors. For the captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. And of what did his character consist? Many pages would not furnish a full and proper answer to this question. I may however say, that his love for his heavenly Father, his devotion, resignation, gratitude, confidence and obedience; his love for mankind, sympathy, compassion, kindness, labors and prayers; his self-government in relation to his appetites, motives, feelings, passions, dispositions; all these particulars are to be included in his character. These qualities and graces and virtues constituted his personal identity. With these in full vigor he left this life. Now did he not enter upon the next incorruptible and immortal existence with all these excellencies? Did he not possess the same habits of piety, benevolence, self-government? This you cannot deny. He could not have been the same person had this character been removed between death and the resurrection. Now if Judas had been raised at the same moment with the Savior, what would have been his character? He could not have been the same Judas who betrayed his master, unless he retained the same habits of feeling, thinking and acting. Sup-

pose he had appeared full of devotion, benevolence, purity and holiness, although such a supposition is perfectly absurd, would he have retained his personal identity? Would he have been Judas Iscariot? Surely not. If then we are ever raised to a second life we must retain the characters which we here form, or it is no longer we ourselves who are raised, but a new being created from our worn out materials.

In the last place, the conscience must be raised, for this is one of the essential ingredients of our nature. This consists in the power of determining between sin and holiness, and the moral sense which approves when you have done right and condemns when you have done wrong. Now illustrate this remark by a reference to the youngest son described. On earth he knows the difference between virtue and vice. He has practised iniquity, and this moral sense gives him severe torment. Let him enter the next existence. Must he not be able to distinguish between righteousness and wickedness? Will not his transgression appear as sinful as it did before death? Will not his moral sense be as ready to execute the sentence of condemnation? And can he be the same man without this moral judgment and moral sense? Surely not. Here then is an unanswerable argument for a future righteous retribution. We must enter upon the next life with the same characters we form in this world. Sin will then confer the most severe punishment, and holiness the most satisfactory reward. And the undying conscience of man can never cease its operations; it must give happiness to the holy so long as his holiness continues; it must render misery to the sinful so long as his sinfulness lasts. Such then is the nature of sin and holiness, that the righteous must be hereafter rewarded by the righteousness which they have here secured; and the wicked must be hereafter pun-

ished by the wickedness which they have here acquired. In proof of the soundness of this conclusion I appeal to the common sense of mankind.

Now, my dear sir, you are aware that great exertions have been made to destroy the force of this argument, because it is so plain, intelligible, convincing and rational. Some have employed the weapons of ridicule and sarcasm, and others have made free use of evasion and sophistry. A few of the most plausible attempts to remove an obstacle so utterly destructive of your system I will now notice.

1. One objection to this argument is thus stated. Paul was instantaneously converted, and why may not all sinners receive the same favor at their entrance upon the next existence? Because there is no connexion whatever in the two cases. A miracle was wrought to give Paul convincing evidence that Jesus was the true Messiah. No change whatever was effected in his moral character by this supernatural influence. All the reformation, in views, feelings, dispositions, tempers, conversation and habits which was necessary to make him an acceptable christian, was left for him to effect by his own exertions in cooperation with the ordinary influences of the spirit. He was also elected to be an apostle to the gentiles, and a departure from the common laws of providence seemed necessary to prepare this chosen instrument for his important mission. There is no probability that such measures will be adopted to bring those to holiness who have already a belief in the divine mission of Jesus, and who wilfully reject his claims and his entreaties. So that the example of Paul has no relation to the subject in dispute whatever; and of course this objection deserves no further refutation.

2. Another of your party has attempted to ridicule the idea of there being any distinctions in another life

on account of the different degrees of knowledge and goodness here acquired. Such language may serve to flatter the vulgar and degraded, but will appear to all who reverence the words of Jesus very unfortunate for the author. For if the Savior has taught any lesson with distinctness it is this. To whom much is given, of them will much be required. He that knowingly neglected his master's will shall be beaten with many stripes; while he who ignorantly disobeyed shall receive a milder chastisement. He who improved five talents was to be ruler over five cities, and he who buried his one talent in the earth was to be cast into outer darkness. As one star differeth from another in glory, so shall the children of the resurrection. All revelation conspires to convince us that every man shall be rewarded according to his deeds. You might as well ridicule the idea that one man is wiser than another, better than another, happier than another in this world. You may as well say that Judas and his Master must be on the same equality in the next existence. I do not consider this attack on the doctrine of a future righteous retribution worthy of any further refutation. I am only sorry to see a man who professes to be a christian so ready to confound all moral distinctions, and so ready to leave the impression that he neither wishes nor expects any thing better beyond the grave, than is given to the murderer of tens and of hundreds.

3. Another objection of this nature is stated. Some die in a state of mental derangement, consequently they must enter the next life as they leave this world. This does not follow. A few facts in mental philosophy will reconcile this apparent difficulty. No one believes that any individual will be raised in a state of insanity, or in the childishness and dotage of old age. Neither of these characters are what have been acquired by the

free agent. The mind when in its most perfect state must be the accountable person. As insanity depends on various physical causes, it may exist without impairing the mental powers or injuring the moral character. The same may be said of the decays of sickness and years. Let me state merely two facts in illustration of my remarks. A person was taken suddenly deranged. He forgot every thing of his former life. He lost all knowledge. After a few years he was as suddenly restored. He forgot every thing that took place during his insanity. He recollected every thing he knew when the calamity happened. After some time he again became suddenly insane. He remembered every thing which had occurred during his former period of derangement. He forgot every thing else. This is enough to prove that a person loses neither his knowledge nor goodness by any physical disease. Many more facts of a similar character you may find in works on mental philosophy. One more example I will mention. It is no uncommon thing in France for the physicians to cure insanity by drowning. The experiment has been once successfully performed in this county. The maniac was chained in a large tub, and the water poured upon him until life departed. He was then resuscitated in the usual method; and he who was before the trial a most raving madman became perfectly rational. Now is it not in the power of our Father to remedy all these apparent difficulties without the least inconvenience, so that every one shall appear in his true and real character at his entrance upon the next existence? I consider this objection entirely removed.

4. But a more difficult case is supposed. Here are twin brothers. The elder forms a christian character. The younger gives himself to dissipation. At the age of forty the younger strikes the elder on his head, and

produces mental derangement which lasts through life. This event becomes the occasion of reformation to the abandoned wretch, and he devotes himself to religion the remainder of his days. Both depart at eighty. The question is triumphantly asked how both can be rewarded exactly according to their deeds. Now this is altogether an irrational supposition. No case of the kind ever occurred. But shortsighted as I am, I find no difficulty in reconciling it with my views. In the first place the younger son must suffer greatly every day of his life in beholding a brother deprived of reason, in reflecting upon his own wickedness which caused the dreadful calamity, so that although he is reformed he experiences in some degree the natural consequence of his iniquity. Then he has great obstacles to overcome in the work of reformation, on account of his deeply rooted habits of sin; so that beginning at the age of forty with such a load of vitiated tastes, and carnal propensities, and wicked practices, he will not be able to make great advancement. He must be much the worse for all his transgressions. When both enter the other world, the elder must have all the goodness he had acquired, which at forty would be nearly as great as is ever obtained; and his enjoyment could not be embittered by any painful remembrances or any sinful lusts and passions. The other is indeed prepared for heavenly felicity, but his happiness must be diminished by the stains which more than twenty years' service in the cause of depravity has left upon his soul; and especially by the recollection of that act which deprived his brother of forty years' enjoyment and improvement. Does not this render the retribution in a proper degree equitable? If you think it does not, you may easily suppose that it is in the power of our Father to place them in such different situations so as to rectify all in-

ties. This objection then amounts to nothing and
r much of a piece with the preceding. In short
gument for a future retribution which is drawn
he nature of sin and holiness appears to my mind
ect demonstration. I know that attacks may be
upon this as upon every thing else, even the ex-
e of the Divinity. But it seems to me when I
such attempts like aiming to prove that there is
ı in the heavens, because there are some spots on
ıc, and because it is sometimes obscured by an
e.

ıs, my dear sir, I have given you a few of the ar-
ıts from reason for a future retribution. They
: to my mind conclusive. More might be stated
r limits permit me to make them intelligible to the
on reader. These however are sufficient to give
:line of this mode of reasoning, and this is all I
t to accomplish in my present publication. In
of the correctness of my several conclusions I
l to the common sense of mankind.

LETTER IV.

My Dear Sir,

I will now direct your attention to the nature and means of christian salvation. I have often thought that erroneous notions upon this subject were at the foundation of your system; and as I have before given it a thorough investigation, and as I am under the necessity of introducing it in order to a full discussion of the question of divine rewards and punishments, I shall offer no apology for making free use of my former publication.

I. What then is christian salvation? It is deliverance from ignorance, error and sin; and the possession of christian knowledge, virtue and piety. Perhaps I can render this definition more clear by a familiar example. Suppose then that a learned heathen now stood before me; one who worshipped idols; one who had heard of Jesus and believed him to be an impostor; one whose conduct was openly immoral. I undertake to convert him to christianity by rational argument and evangelical motives. I first convince him of the existence of one infinite Creator, Governor and Father. You perceive that he would then be saved from his ignorance concern-

ing the nature and perfections of the Supreme Being; as well as from the darkness and folly of idolatry. I next convince him that Jesus of Nazareth is the divinely commissioned Savior of the world. You perceive that he would then be saved from his erroneous opinions respecting the one Mediator between God and men; as well as from an evil heart of unbelief. I further convince him that if he would be a true christian, he must obey the instructions, imitate the example and imbibe the spirit of the great Author and Finisher of our faith. When his actions give evidence of a reformation of heart and life, you perceive that he would be saved from his iniquities; as well as blessed with a righteous and holy character. When these things are accomplished, you must admit that he has experienced christian salvation. Now from this illustration, you may learn four most important gospel truths. First, that christian salvation consists in deliverance from ignorance, error and sin; and in the possession of christian knowledge, virtue and piety. Secondly, that this salvation takes place whenever a person becomes a practical christian. Thirdly, that so long as any one continues a practical christian, he is in no danger of punishment. And fourthly, that divine pardon can be obtained only by forming a christian character. The truth of these four propositions I will now endeavor to prove, from reason, observation and the scriptures.

1. I am first to prove that christian salvation consists in deliverance from ignorance, error and sin; and in the possession of christian knowledge, virtue and piety. Look then to the scriptural argument. Why was our Savior called Jesus? "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Why did he appear on earth? "The son of man is come to save that which was lost;" lost in darkness, doubt and

depravity. Why did he commission Paul to visit the gentiles? "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God." Why did he give himself a ransom for sinners? "To redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And who are the subjects of his saving power? "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." If then a person is turned from heathenism, to the service of the living God; if he is redeemed from his iniquities, and rendered zealous of the good works of the gospel; he is surely saved from his religious blindness and depravity, and possessed of christian instruction and holiness. Many more passages of a similar import might be quoted, but these are sufficient to prove the truth of the first proposition.

2. I am secondly to prove that this salvation takes place whenever a person becomes a practical christian. Look again at the argument from revelation. What did Jesus say to the penitent female who anointed his feet at the house of Simon the Pharisee? "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." *Hath saved thee;* not will save thee at some future period; but, hath even now secured thy salvation. His miraculous powers enabled him to know that her repentance was sincere, that her reformation was commenced, and that her belief in his divine mission would influence her to strive for christian perfection. What is the exhortation of Paul to his beloved Timothy? "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God, who hath saved us." *Hath saved us;* not will hereafter confer salvation; but hath already saved us, by aiding us in becoming obedient disciples of Christ Jesus. What is his testimony concerning God in his letter to Titus? "According to his mercy he saved us." *He saved us.*

If he had before saved them, their salvation could not be an event of futurity. The same apostle makes these explicit declarations to his converts. "We are saved by hope." "By grace ye are saved." *Are saved!* In both cases the salvation was then experienced. This meaning is more strongly expressed in the original. The literal translation is this—we *were* saved by hope; by grace ye *were* saved. Thus no doubt remains that he spoke of an event already passed. Take one example from the epistle of Peter. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us." *Doth now save us!* This ordinance was then leading them to the acquisition of christian knowledge, virtue and piety; and thus saving them from ignorance, error and sin. If then our Savior pronounced his disciples saved, as soon as they cordially embraced his religion; and if the inspired apostles declared that their reformed converts, as well as themselves, had already experienced salvation; surely christian salvation takes place whenever a person becomes a practical christian. Many similar passages might be produced, but these are sufficient to prove the truth of the second proposition.

3. I am thirdly to prove that so long as any one continues a practical christian, he is in no danger of punishment. He will not indeed be saved from temporal afflictions, as were many of them who attended upon our Lord's personal ministry. Still the words save, saved, salvation and Savior are frequently used in the scriptures in reference to these evils. From such trials, the sincere christian is now delivered only so far as his cheerful resignation raises him above their influence. But he is in no danger of suffering that misery which is the natural consequence of sin. For there is a hell only for the impenitent and disobedient; and what is called the wrath of God abides only on those who are his enemies

by their wicked works. And there is no future condemnation to those who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For what does Paul say to his Roman converts? "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, *being now justified* by his blood, we *shall be saved* from *wrath* through him. For if, when we were enemies, *we were reconciled* to God through the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, *we shall be saved* by his life." Here you perceive that two kinds of salvation are mentioned. The first was deliverance from sin, which they had already experienced; the second would be deliverance from wrath, or the natural consequence of sin, in a future world, which would take place hereafter. For if they remained holy, no torment would await their entrance upon another existence. Paul's only fear on this subject was, lest any should abandon the christian character, and become so wicked as to incur future punishment. And although an inspired apostle, he manifests his sense of the danger, even in regard to himself; for he has written this passage. "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached unto others, *I myself should be a castaway.*" A few other passages might be adduced to prove that the practical christian has nothing to fear but sin; but enough has been said to prove the truth of the third proposition.

4. I am fourthly to prove, that divine pardon can be obtained only by the formation of a christian character. And what is divine pardon? Nothing more nor less than deliverance from the power and punishment of sin; and the possession and enjoyment of holiness. And can the sinner secure this without reformation and improvement? Look once more to the law and the testimony. What are the words of Isaiah? "Let the

wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." This is perfectly plain. If the depraved forsakes his depravity, he escapes its punishment. What are the words of Jeremiah? "It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and sin." This is equally plain. The house of Judah could obtain forgiveness only by forsaking their iniquities. And what was our Savior's commission to his apostles? "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name." And what is repentance, but forsaking wickedness and acquiring holiness? and what is the remission of sins, but deliverance from their power and punishment? And what was the exhortation of Peter? "Repent and be converted." Why? "That your sins may be blotted out." You perceive that pardon and reformation are inseparable. Whoever forsakes any sin, that sin is immediately pardoned; and until a sin is forsaken, it cannot be forgiven. This is the current language of revelation. A host of texts might be produced in proof of this assertion; but sufficient have been quoted to prove the truth of the fourth proposition.

But, my dear sir, I will not trust to scriptural evidence alone. I appeal to your observation. Take the man of intemperance. You perceive that his unlawful indulgence causes immediate pain, and not unfrequently sickness. The seeds of various diseases soon take deep root, and undermine the constitution; the balance of temper is destroyed; the tender sympathies of the soul are perverted; the benevolent affections of the heart are brutalized; the moral powers are rendered insensible

to good impressions; the intellectual faculties are enervated and shattered; property is dissipated; family and friends are disgraced; and the order of social life is disturbed. Add to all this, his distressing reflections on the past; his inefficient and broken resolutions of the present; his dismal forebodings of the future, and what earthly punishment more severe need be imagined? And how is he to obtain pardon for this sin? Suppose God should audibly pronounce his forgiveness from heaven; would this insure his happiness so long as he continued intemperate? No. It would be of no service whatever for him to know that he was pardoned in the mind of his heavenly Father, so long as his punishment was not removed. He can secure enjoyment only by reformation. So it is with *every* sin of heart and life. We may pray for forgiveness, and appeal to the divine mercy; but unless we endeavor to forsake our iniquities, we only prove ourselves hypocrites. The husbandman may as well expect a harvest without any cultivation of the soil. No. All such expectations are irrational and unscriptural. God is indeed sufficiently merciful. He is infinite love. He is a perfect Father of all his children. But no change takes place in his character when our sins are pardoned. The reformation must be in ourselves. And although we were already pardoned in his mind, we could not escape from the punishment of a single sin, until it was forsaken. Consequently, we can obtain the divine pardon only by forming a christian character.

But will not the punishment frequently continue after the sin is forsaken? Will reformation restore to the man of intemperance, his impaired constitution, his wasted estate, his lost confidence, and his self-approbation? Surely not. The consequences of sin must remain long after it is forsaken. And for this there can be no immediate pardon; because so long as we remain the same

persons, whether in time or eternity, our memories must remind us of our past transgressions. Do you suppose that Judas can forget that he betrayed his Master? And whenever this base act of treachery occurs to his mind, must it not fill his soul with the most excruciating anguish? Yes. Sin is the same to the soul that poison is to the body. Take poison, and you injure or destroy your health. Commit sin, and you injure or destroy your soul's happiness. Expel the poison, and you regain your health; although your constitution will be injured in proportion to the quantity taken, and the time it is retained in the system. Forsake sin, and you regain your happiness; although your soul will be injured in proportion to the degree and duration of your depravity; and you must be forever the worse for the sins committed. Until you expel the poison you cannot regain your health. Until you forsake your sin, you cannot escape its punishment, nor experience divine pardon, nor obtain christian salvation. I must conclude, therefore, that the four propositions are proved true, from reason, observation and scripture.

I think, sir, I have said enough to explain the nature of christian salvation. You perceive that Jesus was not sent into the world merely to save a few Jews from the destruction of Jerusalem. He was not sent to suffer and die so that God could extend pardon to a few elect individuals. He came to establish a moral and spiritual kingdom. We are all created for happiness. We can never secure this object of our creation without holiness. When we become holy then we are prepared for happiness in this world and in the future; we are saved from the principal cause of earthly misery, and from the only cause of future torment. This therefore is the salvation which our Savior was sent to accomplish. This leads me to my second inquiry.

II. By what means does our heavenly Father effect our christian salvation? By certain instruments, prinples and motives. The most important of these I will now describe.

1. Our heavenly Father saves us through the instrumentality of Christ Jesus. He brought him into being, commissioned him to be a Savior of all who would come unto him, and qualified him for the successful execution of his divine office. But how is Christ Jesus an instrument for our salvation? Let Peter answer this question. "God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." So far then as he turns any one from his wickedness, so far he saves him from its punishment, and no farther; and he effects the salvation of sinners in no other way. But in what manner does he turn us from our sins? Let this question be answered by the experience of those already saved; by the best christians of all denominations. Inquire what first induced them to become sincere disciples of Jesus and you will receive a variety of replies. You will find that some have been early and successfully trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and gradually drawn into the paths of holiness by the pure morality of the gospel; while others have been converted more suddenly in maturer years by the great discoveries of christianity. You will find that some have been excited to consideration and amendment by the example of Jesus; while others have been influenced to obedience by his benevolent labors and stupendous miracles. You will find that some have been stimulated to exertion in the christian life by his glorious promises of a heavenly reward; while others have been savingly alarmed by the awful threatenings of future punishment. You will find that some have been melted to contrition by his agonizing sufferings;

while others have bowed their stubborn wills before the majesty of his cross. From these and similar confessions, you must conclude that Jesus saves us from our iniquities, by his life and labors; by his example and instructions; by his consolations and discoveries; by his promises and threatenings, and by his sufferings and death. And what is proved true by actual experience, you find confirmed by the clearest declarations of scripture. For spiritual salvation is there ascribed to these various causes; sometimes to one, sometimes to another, and sometimes to all combined. The whole process is therefore perfectly plain and intelligible. Jesus exerts no mysterious or miraculous influence over our souls. So far as he induces us to become good, so far he is instrumental in our salvation, and no farther; for we are not now saved, and we shall never be saved, any farther than we become holy. This is expressly declared by our Savior himself. "Not every one that saith unto me—Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." The writer to the Hebrews is equally decided. "Christ Jesus became the author of *eternal* salvation unto all them that *obey* him." Consequently those who continue disobedient are not partakers of his salvation.

2. Our heavenly Father saves us through the instrumentality of his holy word. This truth is likewise plainly taught in scripture. But how does the bible effect our salvation? By warning us of our moral dangers, furnishing remedies for our spiritual diseases, and providing instruction in relation to our immortal interests. For we are assured that "all scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Let me then illustrate this position by a familiar example. Give a navigator an accurate chart of some dangerous coast;

let it exhibit a perfect delineation of all rocks, shoals and quicksands; let the course of safety be described with equal fidelity and plainness. Now if he follow the right directions, his chart will be instrumental in the salvation of himself, his crew and his vessel; but if he proceed in a contrary path, his neglect will expose him to all the calamities of shipwreck. So with the bible. Put it into the hands of an intelligent child of God, and he will readily perceive that it discloses the moral dangers to which he is exposed, and that it discovers a sure and safe way to holiness and heaven. He will feel conscious of freedom and ability, either to disregard its admonitions, or to comply with its requisitions. Now if he follows its instructions, he will assuredly be saved from ignorance, vice and misery; and rendered enlightened, virtuous and happy. But if he slight its warnings, despise its counsels and disobey its injunctions, he will as certainly experience the consequences of ignorance, error and sin. The bible is instrumental in effecting his salvation in the same way that a chart saves the mariner from shipwreck. The divine word contains the same efficacy now as at the period of its first promulgation. Whoever sincerely endeavors to make it the standard of his faith and practice, will inevitably secure salvation, although he should be deprived of the privilege of hearing the preached gospel. But no one should be so foolish as to suppose this holy book possesses any mysterious or miraculous charm. No. You may cover every shelf in your house with bibles; you may place them under every pillow; you may even bind them to every heart; and if you use them in no other way, you may as well expect salvation from your almanac. No. The bible will do you no good, unless you study its pages, and understand its contents, and obey its instructions; and then it will prove instrumental in your salva-

tion just so far as it makes wiser, better and holier, and no farther.

3. Our heavenly Father saves us through the influence of his holy spirit. This fact is plainly taught in the gospel. But how does the spirit of God effect our salvation? Let an inspired apostle answer this question. "The spirit also helpeth our infirmities." But how is this help communicated? In a supernatural manner? Does it give us the power of working miracles, and of speaking unknown languages? No. It was so imparted to the apostles and some of their first jewish and gentile converts; so as to convince them more deeply of the truth of christianity, and aid them more effectually in its propagation. But we have no good evidence that any believers have received this special influence of the spirit since the apostolic age. Is it communicated in an irresistible manner? Does it compel us to become christians? No. For this would destroy our accountableness, and directly contradict the scriptures. These commands are plainly given. "Quench not the spirit." "Grieve not the holy spirit of God." And this charge was boldly made to the Jews. Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the holy ghost." If they had power to withstand its influence, we must surely possess the same power, for human nature in this respect remains unchanged. Is it communicated in an arbitrary manner? Is it bestowed without any conditions? No. It is promised to those, and those only, who ask, seek and knock for its assistance. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him." "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." "Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure." Our Father

is ever ready to help all who help themselves; and as he has promised aid to none others, those who neglect the means of grace, must not expect any peculiar assistance. Is it communicated in a discernible manner? Can we distinguish its operations from the results of our own thoughts, feelings, affections and imaginations? No. For if we could, we should realize as much of a miracle as any wrought by our Savior; and we all believe the day of miracles to be past. And to prevent this pernicious error, our divine master has given us a very explicit caution. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit." Is it communicated in a uniform manner? Does it assist all persons in the same way, and at any one particular period? No. For then we could determine the mode and time of operation. But experience furnishes no such result. And an inspired apostle assures us, that there "are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." If the help of the spirit is communicated in none of these ways, how is it imparted? Neither revelation nor experience furnishes an answer to this question. We must therefore rest satisfied with knowing that we are assisted by the holy spirit in our exertions for salvation; and assisted in such a way as not to affect our free agency. We have a parallel case in the productions of nature. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the ear bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." If you see the ripened grain, you know that God has blessed the labors of the husbandman, although you cannot tell the time when,

nor the manner how. So in religion. If you behold a person exhibiting love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, you know that his infirmities have received help from the holy spirit. And just so far as this influence produces these christian fruits, just so far it is instrumental in our salvation, and no farther.

4. Our heavenly Father saves us through the instrumentality of the christian ministry. But how does the minister of Christ effect our salvation? By inducing us to forsake and avoid sin; to acquire and maintain holiness. And by what means does he accomplish these objects? Ask those pious believers who readily ascribe their salvation to the instrumentality of their pastors. They will frankly confess, that their attention was first awakened to the claims of religion, by some rational, affecting or persuasive discourse. Or they will freely admit, that they were first excited to duty by the conversation of their religious teacher, either in public or private, either at the bed of sickness, in the hour of death, or at the house of affliction. There are others indeed in almost every society, who will not acknowledge that they have received any perceptible benefit from the christian ministry. But is there not reason to believe, that they have been imperceptibly deterred from many vain thoughts and sinful desires, from many unkind remarks and cruel accusations, from many vicious practices and wicked habits, by hearing the weekly sound of the everlasting gospel? Is there not reason to believe, that they have also been excited, in the same way, to cherish good feelings, to cultivate amiable dispositions, to exhibit benevolent sympathies, and to perform righteous actions? You can judge fairly of the saving effects of preaching, only by comparing the intellectual and moral state of a whole congregation, where no christian instructions have

lately been dispensed, with one which has long enjoyed the blessings of religious institutions. Whenever this is done candidly, you will be convinced, that the constant warnings against wickedness, the continual recommendations of righteousness, the unceasing proclamation of the love of God and the claims of Christ, and the ever ascending spiritual devotion, have a direct and powerful tendency to elevate the tone of moral feeling and character. And the principal reason that more apparent good is not effected, must be found in the hearers. The apostle fully confirms the truth of this assertion. "For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." This must ever be the case so long as men are free agents. Their improvement from preaching must depend on their own exertions, in connexion with the promised blessing. Yes; you may attend church on every returning sabbath; you may have the most eloquent preacher in christendom; you may hear the whole counsel of God declared from week to week and from year to year; and unless you listen to the truths of religion, and bring them home to your minds and consciences, and strive to reduce them to practice, you can reap but little benefit from the christian ministry; for this instrument will save you just so far as it makes you good, and no farther.

5. Our heavenly Father saves us through the instrumentality of the events of his providence. These are of two kinds, joyous and grievous. Both are wisely designed to lead his intelligent children to consideration and obedience. This is clearly taught in various passages of scripture. But how do the events of providence effect our salvation? By leading us to self-examination and self-improvement. Prosperity is admirably adapted to excite our gratitude to our heavenly Benefac-

tor, and encourage unreserved obedience to his holy laws. No doubt many may be found in every religious denomination, on whom the goodness of God has exerted its saving influence. But I fear the pleasing events of life have corrupted a still larger number, and rendered them more thoughtless and worldly minded, more covetous and depraved. On the other hand, adversity has produced an abundant harvest of holiness. The afflictive events of providence have probably awakened the attention of more persons to the concerns of religion, than any other cause whatever. You find some in almost every church who were first moved to commence the work of salvation, by some disappointment, desertion or suffering; by the loss either of health or friends or property. But affliction has not uniformly produced holy fruits. Many have been hardened by their trials, and made more depraved and wretched. This must continue to be the case so long as we remain free agents. Our Father designs our best good in all the events of his providence. We have power, either to improve them to our salvation, or to misimprove them to our condemnation. Our interest, our duty, and our happiness coincide. Let no one then be so simple as to think he shall be always sure of happiness, without personal holiness, because he now receives a large share of temporal blessings. For unless he faithfully improves all his talents, they will hereafter swell the fountain of his misery. Neither let any one believe that he is sure of future felicity, simply because he is afflicted while on earth. No. You may see every hope of your soul blasted; you may be deserted by every mortal friend; you may be tormented with every bodily disease; you may be stripped of every earthly comfort; and if your trials render you more peevish, repining and rebellious, they will assuredly increase your guilt, your wretched-

ness and your condemnation. Unless they serve to wean your affections from earthly vanities; unless they raise your thoughts to the unseen realities of eternity; unless they lead you to self-scrutiny, self-discipline and self-cultivation, they cannot promote your christian salvation. For this instrument will save you just so far as it makes you holy, and no farther.

6. Our heavenly Father saves us through the influence of faith. A belief in the messiahship of Jesus leads to christian salvation. You find this plainly taught on almost every page of the gospel. But how does faith effect our salvation? By influencing our thoughts, motives and conduct in the ways of truth, virtue and piety. It operates in the same manner as our belief in many other facts. Much of our daily conduct is the result of faith, and not of certain knowledge. Take an example. You may find a man of learning, who was comparatively ignorant when he arrived at years of maturity. His advantages of instruction had been few and defective. But he *believed* that important and valuable literary acquisitions might be made by attention to study. He accordingly procured the necessary books, employed the requisite instructers, and devoted to the pursuit of knowledge a sufficient portion of time and thought. And what is the result? A good education. This is therefore the effect of his belief; for it was his faith which first excited him to commence a literary course, and stimulated him to persevere to the accomplishment of his wishes. Now faith in the anointed Jesus operates in precisely the same manner. A person becomes rationally convinced that he is the divinely commissioned Savior of sinners. He therefore receives all his instructions as eternal truth. These assure him that salvation can be obtained only by obedience to the divine commands. He accordingly makes the necessary

exertion for the acquisition of a christian character. This is the natural result of his belief. His faith in Jesus therefore influences him to obedience, and secures his deliverance from iniquity, and his possession of holiness. And in this process, there is nothing more mysterious than in the faith of the student.

But are there not two kinds of faith? Certainly; the one speculative and the other practical; the one living and the other dead; the one of the head and the other of the heart; for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." And you may frequently see both kinds exemplified in the concerns of this world. Take an example. You behold two persons strongly tempted to engage in gambling. You assure them that if they follow this pernicious practice, they will sooner or later lose their property, ruin their character and disgrace their friends. You adduce sufficient evidence to convince them of the truth of your assertions. Now the faith of one is practical and influences him to resist the temptation, and thus saves him from severe punishment. The faith of the other is speculative, and while he professes to believe in the ruinous consequences of the forbidden vice, permits him to engage and continue in its fascinations and fatal allurements. So in religion. The great majority in civilized lands profess to believe in the christian religion. A part only are influenced by their faith to conform to its requisitions. The remainder act in direct opposition to their profession, because their belief is merely speculative. So far therefore as a person's faith induces him to obey the christian commands, so far it is instrumental in his salvation, and no farther. And a belief in any particular doctrine or set of opinions is of no further value to any person, than it contributes to his goodness or happiness. For no one will ever be judged by the articles of his creed, but by the fruits of his faith,

"the deeds done in the body." Consequently no faith is effectual to salvation, except that "which works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world."

7. Our heavenly Father saves us through the influence of hope. This is expressly asserted by an inspired apostle. But how does hope effect our salvation? By influencing us to become the obedient followers of Jesus. For John informs us, "that every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as Christ is pure." Many of our temporal affairs are regulated by this very principle. Take an example. Why does the husbandman prepare the soil, sow the seed, and cultivate the growing plant? Does he surely *know* that success will crown his exertions? No. The mere *hope* of a harvest is the moving cause of his labors. So in religion. A person really desires to obtain present and future happiness; he is convinced, from reason and observation and scripture, that nothing but christian obedience can secure these blessings. His hope therefore influences his conduct, and causes him to comply with the prescribed conditions of salvation. So far then as his moral goodness is the result of his christian hope, so far is this principle instrumental in his salvation, and no farther. And there is nothing more incomprehensible in its operation, than in the hope of the husbandman.

But are there not two kinds of hope? Certainly; the one living and influencing the conduct; and the other dead and exerting no salutary influence. An illustration of both kinds may be readily furnished from real life. Two persons are equally desirous of obtaining a fortune. The hope of one is a living principle, and influences him to rise early, and retire late, and "eat the bread of carefulness;" and thus enables him to secure the object of his wishes. The hope of the other is inoperative, and permits him to remain inactive, unenterprising, and

perhaps imprudent; and thus naturally disappoints his desires. So in spiritual concerns. All persons wish for present and future happiness. A part only are influenced by their hope to make the necessary exertions for the acquisition of christian virtue. The remainder continue more or less negligent and disobedient; and consequently secure but a small portion even of earthly enjoyment, and leave the world with a very imperfect preparation for heavenly felicity. Now for a person to hope for salvation, while neglecting the christian duties, is more absurd than for a pauper to expect riches, while confined to the almshouse. And for him to expect present and future happiness, while walking in the paths of open wickedness, is infinitely more absurd, than for the person who cannot swim, to hope for salvation from drowning, while he continnes plunging further and deeper into the bosom of the ocean. Just so far therefore as our hope of happiness influences us to become good, just so far is this principle instrumental in our salvation, and no farther. And this living hope is the only one which will not make us ashamed.

8. Our heavenly Father saves us through the influence of fear. This is taught by the precepts and example of our Savior and his apostles. But how does fear effect our christian salvation? By deterring us from wickedness. We are daily influenced by this principle in the regulation of our own conduct, and in our government of those under our protection. Take a family of children. Some of them may be persuaded to filial obedience by kind and generous motives; while others can be moved to duty only by the fear of punishment. So in the christian world. Present religion to the attention of men, and some are induced by the purest principles of action to commence and continue the work of reformation and improvement; while others seem

hardened against every tender and affecting consideration. You may persuade and entreat them to embrace the gospel by the friendship and sufferings and death of a crucified Savior; by the mercy and love and blessings of a heavenly Father; by all that is dear and desirable on earth and in heaven; and you produce little or no effect. You must depict the bitter fruits of sin, and describe the torments of the damned, and arouse their fears of future punishment, before you can start the tears of penitence. Inquire into the experience of many good christians in almost every denomination, and you will learn that the fear of misery first induced them to begin the work of salvation. Had not the terrors of the Lord been proclaimed, they might have continued impenitent even to the present hour, and perhaps become hardened profligates. But commencing the work of religion in fear, the very lowest principle of human nature, they gradually learned to love God for his goodness, and to serve him for the rewards of holiness. So far therefore as the fear of punishment influences us to forsake and avoid sin, so far it is instrumental in our salvation, and no farther.

But does not fear operate in different ways? Certainly. You may see this illustrated in temporal concerns. Behold a vessel in a dangerous storm. The fear of shipwreck nerves one mariner with double courage and strength; and enables him to make wonderful exertions for self-preservation. A second is wholly unmanned, becomes faint and sick, and is perhaps left a prey to despair. So in the concerns of the soul. The fear of punishment influences one to persevere in a sober, righteous and godly life. A second is wholly unnerved, driven to despair, perhaps deprived of the use of his reasoning powers, and even abandoned to self-destruction. But when this takes place, we may be

assured that his fears have not been excited by the terrors of the Lord. For Jesus and his apostles certainly declared the whole counsel of God; sinners were as depraved then as now; and we have no account of any such occurrence under their preaching. We cannot do better than imitate their example, and make sinners fear nothing so much as the natural and lasting consequences of their sins.

Perhaps you will now ask, my dear sir, if we are not saved by our good works? Whatever may be said as to our being saved by them, it is certain that we cannot be saved without them; for they are the only scriptural evidence of a christian character, as well as the chie method of forming it. This is the reason that they are so emphatically insisted upon by our Savior and his apostles. Perhaps there is no other subject, on which they have said so much and so earnestly; because, if not holiness itself, they are the manifestations of holiness, and considered in connexion with their motives, the elements of it. If the fruit be bad, you pronounce the tree corrupt. If the stream be bitter, you call the fountain impure. If the outward actions be vicious, you declare the heart depraved. For the same reason, if the conduct be virtuous, you consider the soul to be holy. Hence you see the infinite importance of good works; for without them there can be no evidence of christian holiness; and consequently no ground to hope for salvation. In this conclusion, the sacred writers wonderfully harmonize. I know, indeed, that some persons have supposed Paul and James at variance on this point. But this is the mistake of ignorance. Paul asserts that a christian is saved without works of law. By works of law, he means the jewish rites and ceremonies; circumcision, sacrifices, fasting, washing of hands, paying tithes, and the like. And surely these

cannot aid a believer in Jesus in forsaking his iniquities. He also declares that a man is justified by faith alone. By faith, he intends that living, operative principle, which is as sure to yield good fruits, as the sun is to send forth light and heat. And it is this faith which saves the believer; but good works are the only evidence of the existence of such a principle. Now James was probably writing to those who had perverted the meaning of Paul; and he insists that a man cannot be saved without works. By works, he means the fruits of love to God and man, holiness of heart and life; and he proves his proposition so clearly, that no one ought to mistake his conclusion. The real sentiments then of both apostles, are in perfect harmony with the instructions of their divine master. The substance of the whole matter therefore is manifestly this. Just so far as a person obeys Jesus, just so far will he bring forth good works; and just so far as he exhibits good works, just so far is he a practical christian; and just so far as he is a practical christian, just so far is he saved and no farther.

One most important consideration remains to be mentioned. It is this. We are saved by the grace of God. Yes. To the free grace of our heavenly Father are we indebted for all the *means* of our salvation. And what is free grace? Let me give an imperfect illustration by an example. Suppose an earthly monarch should make a feast, and cordially invite all his subjects to come and partake freely. He receives nothing in return for his entertainment; and consequently it is the gift of his grace or favor. If any of the invited guests refuse to attend, the fault is wholly their own; and for their loss of the pleasure, they can justly blame none but themselves. So it is with our heavenly Father. He wishes all his children to be happy. He knows they can be

happy only by being good. He has accordingly furnished all the means necessary for securing their goodness. And it is solely of his free grace, that he sent his Son Jesus, gave him miraculous powers, and qualified him to be the spiritual Savior of mankind. It is solely of his free grace, that he raised the crucified Lord of glory from the dead, exhibited him to competent witnesses, qualified his apostles to publish the history of a divine revelation, and preserved the gospel unimpaired to the present times. It is solely of his free grace, that he now invites us all to come to the fountain of truth and be cleansed from our moral pollution, that he offers the assistance of his holy spirit to all who seek for it in sincerity, and that he aids us in forming christian characters. For all these unspeakable blessings, we can make him no returns; for he is a perfect being, and cannot be benefited by the services of his imperfect children. So long as we refuse to improve these means to our own progress in holiness, we shall not be saved; but we can blame no one but ourselves; for we are all invited to approach the table of spiritual bread and water. We all have ability to comply with the invitation. We are all encouraged by the most animating motives. And we are assured there can be no other way of becoming happy, but by using our own powers in the acquisition of holiness. Although salvation is of free grace, it can be experienced only by those who cultivate christian knowledge, virtue and piety.

Thus, my dear sir, you have my views on the important subject of salvation. I have shown precisely what it is. I have explained how it is obtained. In proof of my positions I challenge an appeal to reason and fact, experience, observation and scripture. My conclusions give rise to one or two most interesting and important questions. In the first place, do not many in christian

lands leave this world without being saved? without acquiring that holiness which is essential to their happiness? Do not many die in their sinfulness? Certainly. You will return to these questions an affirmative answer. Now let me propose a second serious inquiry. Is there any way pointed out in revelation in which sinners can be saved in passing from this life to a future existence? This you will not pretend. Then must not many go into a future world unsaved, unholy, unfitted for heavenly happiness? This you must admit. There is no possible way in which this conclusion can be fairly avoided. Consequently there must be a future retribution. Now if it was in the power of God to make men holy by a miracle, is it probable that he would thus appear for the salvation of those who had neglected the work during the whole of this probationary scene? Surely not. But I have already shown that goodness can be obtained only by the free choice and persevering exertions of every individual; and therefore no one can be saved until he has forsaken his sins and formed a christian character. I beseech you to consider faithfully the remarks and conclusions of this communication.

LETTER V.

My Dear Sir,

I am now prepared to present you the direct scriptural evidence for a future retribution. In my present communication I shall quote some of the passages which teach or imply that those who become righteous in this world will be rewarded in the next existence. Before I proceed to make my selections I wish to mention a few particulars which we should ever keep in mind when we examine the sacred writings in reference to this doctrine.

In the first place, you will remember that the Jews in the time of our Savior, with the exception of the Sadducees, expected a future existence. You will also recollect that they likewise believed in rewards and punishments beyond the grave. Your principal writers have admitted the truth of these statements. I shall therefore produce no evidence in their support, but take these positions for granted throughout the discussion. Now such being the undisputed facts, you perceive that our Savior had no occasion to teach his hearers in a formal manner the doctrine of a future retribution. If he knew the righteous were to be hereafter rewarded

and the wicked punished he was solemnly bound to confirm them in their present belief, and to correct their erroneous notions concerning the modes of divine administration. The case was precisely similar in relation to the existence and perfections of God. This fundamental article of religion was already embraced by the people to whom he preached. You notice that he never gives a formal annunciation of this important truth. He indeed confirms them in their present belief, and corrects their erroneous views of the paternal character of the Almighty. Now if you examine his teachings in relation to a future retribution you will discover that he adopts a similar practice. He confirms their belief in the certainty of rewards and punishments beyond the grave. He never intimates that the truth of this doctrine was even so much as called in question. He enters into no argument in order to remove objections, because none were then advanced. You might therefore as well affirm that Jesus never taught the existence of God as to say that he never proclaimed the doctrine of future retribution.

In the second place, you will remember that the converts from heathenism to whom some of the apostles preached, and to whom most of the epistles were addressed, hoped for a future existence. You will also recollect that they likewise believed that the good would be rewarded and the wicked punished beyond the grave. Your principal writers have admitted the truth of both these assertions; and consequently I shall offer no arguments in their support, but take these positions for granted throughout the discussion. Now these being the undisputed facts, you perceive that the apostles were not called upon to declare in a formal way the doctrine of a future retribution. They had merely to confirm their hearers and readers in their present belief, and

t some of their erroneous opinions respecting the
ılars of the subject. They would adopt a course
: to the one pursued in preaching the gospel to
lius and the Athenians. Look at the example and
of Paul. As I passed by, said he, and beheld
levotions, I found an altar with this inscription:
the unknown God." Whom therefore ye igno-
worship, him declare I unto you. You thus learn
e did not commence his discourse as some modern
naries might have done, by informing his hearers
hey were poor, miserable, benighted idolaters,
ıte of any faith in the only living and true God.
ɔnfirmed them in whatever correct notions they
have entertained respecting a supreme Creator,
ned his nature and character, alluded to the evi-
of his existence and perfections, and thus politely
ed their erroneous and darkened conceptions on
ındamental question. The same course was pur-
ın regard to a future retribution. The converts
ıeathenism never doubted or denied the truth of
ɔntiment; consequently no occasion was given to
it as an elementary fact or defend it with rational
ıents. It was sufficient that an allusion was made
'hen proper, as a motive to obedience. And you
as well declare that Paul never taught to the
ıians the existence and perfections of the true God,
ɜay that he never taught the doctrine of a future
ution.

:he third place, you will remember that if the doc-
ɔf a future retribution has no foundation in truth,
ɔur Savior and his apostles were solemnly bound to
'e so pernicious an error from the minds of their
rs and readers. For these inspired teachers were
overned by belief on this question, but possessed
n knowledge. They positively knew either that

there was to be a future retribution or that there was to be none. If there was to be one, they also knew that a firm belief in its certainty was of the highest importance; if there was to be none, they likewise knew that a faith in one must be highly injurious. Consequently they ought as honest men to have confirmed them in their opinions or discarded the false sentiment. Now in searching the scriptures you will endeavor to discover if a single hint is given to either jewish or gentile converts to destroy their confidence in the certainty of rewards and punishments beyond the grave. You will carefully watch to see if every thing they taught was not adapted to confirm them in this opinion. Not only so. Merely to have corrected such an error would not have been sufficient. If the doctrine of no future retribution be true, they were most solemnly bound to declare it with great distinctness and frequency. Our Savior should have brought it forward as a new truth in his sermon on the mount, for he was addressing believers in a future retribution. He should have incorporated it in all his teachings, and especially in his commission to his apostles. And they should not have hid this light under a bushel but proclaimed it at all times and on all occasions. It should have stood forth with peculiar prominency on every page of their writings. Now read through their instructions and compositions, and see if you can show me the faintest trace of your doctrine of no future retribution. If you cannot, will not this very silence speak volumes in proof of the prevailing belief on this subject? How unfaithful too must have been those inspired preachers. When your ministers address believers in future rewards and punishments are they equally silent on this question, or are they more faithful to the souls of mankind?

Finally, keeping these several facts in distinct re-

membrance, I think you cannot help discovering that the doctrine of a future retribution is thoroughly incorporated into the whole system of christianity. I suspect you will readily perceive that it is taken for granted or distinctly implied in many places, and in many others plainly and seriously mentioned as a motive to obedience. I believe you will admit that it is brought forward as clearly as could be rationally expected under existing circumstances, and as often as the subject of remark either required or permitted. You will of course recollect that it was not the principle business of the heralds of salvation to dwell continually on a fact already firmly believed by their hearers. Suppose for instance I should be commissioned to preach what I believed the pure gospel to an old arminian society. Suppose I should remain long enough with them to give a thorough course of lectures on all the distinguishing articles of my creed. Do you suppose I should have occasion to introduce in a formal way the doctrine of a future retribution? Surely not; for this sentiment is already firmly embraced. I should indeed be obliged to show that the doctrines of election and reprobation were irrational, unscriptural and of injurious tendency; and thus prove that a certain portion of the human family were not to receive endless damnation for what they could not avoid. I should also endeavor to establish the full free agency of man, and thus make them understand how retribution must eventually be proportioned exactly according to the true characters of individuals. But to undertake to prove in a formal way that the righteous would be hereafter rewarded and the wicked punished, would be altogether a work of supererogation; for these truths are neither doubted nor denied by the hearers. Now the situation of our Savior and his apostles was not very dissimilar in this particular. By keeping such facts in mind you will

be prepared to investigate the scriptural evidence for a future righteous retribution with candor and understanding.

I will now present you some of the passages of scripture which prove future rewards. I will arrange them in several different classes. My limits will not permit me to record more than half of the number which I have selected for this purpose.

I. In the first place, I will direct your attention to a class of passages which promise a future reward to the righteous and holy.

1. Listen to the following declaration. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; *for great is your reward in heaven.*" Who is the preacher on this occasion? Our divine Savior. Whom is he addressing? His disciples especially. What earthly recompense does he promise them for their practical adherence to his principles? Every species of indignity and defamation and cruelty? Were these persecutions to give them happiness? Surely not. Why then does he pronounce them blessed and exhort them to rejoice? Because he has another and more important promise to mention. A promise of reward? Surely. Of what degree? A *great* reward. Where is it to be bestowed? In *heaven.* What did the hearers understand by this word? A place or state of felicity for the righteous after death. Then the inspired Jesus plainly promises to them a great reward in heaven if they adhere faithfully to his religion, and he mentions this as a great source of support and joy and gladness under their undeserved sufferings. Is it possible for words to teach more definitely and strongly the doctrine of future rewards? Matthew v. 11, 12.

2. Hear the following answer. "If thou wilt be per-

fect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and *thou shalt have treasure in heaven.*" Who is the speaker in this instance? Our anointed teacher. With whom is he conversing? With a rich young ruler of the jewish nation, who inquires what he must do to inherit eternal life. What did he mean by this phrase? Happiness beyond the grave of which the wonderful prophet had previously spoken. On what conditions does the Savior promise this blessing? Obedience to the divine commands. Of what was he then deficient? A willingness to make temporal sacrifices for the religion of the gospel. If he gives up his great riches what compensation shall he receive in return? Heavenly treasures? What does he understand by this phrase? Happiness in another existence, as a reward for his christian character. Our Savior then plainly promised this rich young ruler treasures in heaven if he would manifest the spirit and temper of christianity. Can words more plainly teach the doctrine of future rewards? Matthew 19. 21. 10. 41.

3. Read the following passage. "For ye had compassion on me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, *knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.* Cast not away therefore your confidence which *hath great recompense of reward.*" These words were addressed to converts from judaism. They reminded them of their former sympathy with prisoners, and of their temporal losses. These they had borne with joyfulness. What! rejoice when their means of living were unjustly seized? Yes. Why so? Because they *knew* they had more enduring substance. Such as what? Their christian virtues. Of what use were these? They would qualify them for heavenly happiness. Are they exhorted to preserve their confidence? On what account? Because it would

enable them to secure a great reward hereafter. The sacred writer then reminds these christians of their treasures in heaven, and exhorts them to maintain their confidence in these imperishable riches. Can words more strongly imply the doctrine of future rewards? Heb. 10. 34, 35.

4. Listen to the following instruction. "Then said he also to him, when thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; *for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*" Who is the speaker? The commissioned Savior. To whom did he preach? To one of the chief pharisees. What class of people was he forbidden to invite to convivial entertainments? Neither brethren, friends nor rich neighbors. Why so? Because they would have the inclination and ability to return the invitation and thus confer an earthly reward. But what description of persons should be invited? The poor and unfortunate and wretched. Why? Because they cannot return the favor. But is he to lose his reward? By no means. He shall be blessed. When? At the resurrection of the just. What did the sect of the pharisees understand by the word resurrection? Another conscious existence after death. Did Paul hold to this meaning after he was converted? Hear his own answer. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and unjust." Our Savior then plainly assured his hearer that if he would perform works of benevolence he should be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. Can words more plainly teach the doctrine of future rewards? Luke 14. 14. 2 Timothy 2. 18.

How do your writers explain this decisive passage? In several different ways. I will give the exposition of one of your professed critics. These are his own words. "Jesus was directing the people when they made feasts, to be careful not to forget the poor; "call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." He anticipates the objection of the pharisees, who would say, but if I do this, how shall I be recompensed? *He assures them that they shall not lose their recompense; for although the poor would not recompense them, yet when these poor were raised from inactivity to action, from obscurity to eminence, or returned to such a state after an interruption, then they should be recompensed.*" "By this *rational* interpretation, we avoid the *heathen* notion of recompensing men in one state of being for the conduct they do in another. *Of all reveries this is the wildest.* It is as rational as to suppose that a field of grain sowed in one quarter of the world shall be reaped in another." Look at this *rational* mode of avoiding the "*heathen*" notion plainly taught by the heavenly Jesus! Of all ridiculous and absurd interpretations, this must be allowed to stand in the foremost rank. I have no doubt that many of my unitarian brethren, who never look into a universalist book, will think on reading this extract, that I am attempting to impose some nonsense of some ignoramus upon their credulity, for a genuine passage of some acknowledged writer. I shall therefore be obliged to give the author's name, book and page, so that they may be satisfied this evidence of the wonderful march of mind comes from a man who considers himself one of your leading divines. And if they would spend a few hours in perusing the publications of this and other authors of your order, they might find very many specimens of a similar character. To attempt a serious refutation of such burlesque would be useless. It is

sufficient to say that this explanation of the text makes the divine Savior contradict himself in the same sentence. To reduce it to plain english, it would read thus. Give not to the rich. Why? Because they can and will repay. But give to the poor. Why. Because they will soon become rich and then they will return the whole. So much for system, and superior rationality. I have quoted sufficient for my present purpose. Do they not fully establish my doctrine? *Thomas Whittemore on the Parables*, pp. 109, 110.

II. In the second place, I will call your attention to a class of passages in which christians are exhorted to secure a future heavenly reward by their obedience to the divine commands.

1. Listen to the following exhortation. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; *but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal.*" These are the words of Jesus, They were addressed to his disciples and the multitude. Why should they not give supreme and exclusive attention to earthly pursuits and possessions? Because all things temporal are perishable in their nature, transient in their duration, and can never furnish pure happiness to the thinking mind. To what then should they devote themselves principally? To the acquisition of moral and christian goodness. Why so? Because this can never be taken from them, but will endure after the death of the body, and qualify for felicity in the heavenly existence. Our Savior then plainly directs his hearers to labor earnestly for holiness which will give them the recompense of happiness in heaven. Can words more plainly teach the doctrine of future rewards? Matthew 6. 19, 20. Luke 12. 33. John 4. 36. 1 Tim 6. 19.

2. Hear the following confession. "Know ye not, that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, *but we an incorruptible.* I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; *but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*" These are words of Paul. They were addressed to the converted Corinthians to whom the Isthmean games were familiar. This allusion being kept in view the meaning of the whole passage is easily obtained. Many persons strive for victory in these conflicts so as to obtain an earthly crown. Only one receives the prize. We strive for an incorruptible and unfading crown. All who strive in the right method may receive the reward. Is there any danger of not succeeding in the christian warfare? Great; so much so that even the inspired apostle keeps his appetites and passions in subjection, lest he should fail of receiving this heavenly crown. Here then an inspired apostle honestly acknowledges that he and his converts strive by the cultivation of holiness for an imperishable and future recompense. Can words more plainly imply the doctrine of future rewards? 1 Cor. 9. 24, 27.

3. Read the following exhortation. "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; *forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*" Paul here addresses converts from heathenism. He has just asserted, that if they had hope in Christ only in this world, they must be of all men most miserable; of course he can allude to no earthly reward. The whole argument is concluded with an exhortation to persevere in

the christian course. Why? Because they know that if they remain steadfast and immoveable they shall receive a reward in heaven. The following paraphrase may serve to illustrate more clearly the sense of the apostle. "I earnestly exhort you, be steady to your christian principles; let nothing move you from your faith in Christ, nor induce you to corrupt his religion by the mixture of heathen fable and philosophy, and especially, let nothing shake your faith in the momentous doctrine concerning the resurrection from the dead, upon which all hope depends. Be active in the duties of life; be ever diligent, ever abounding, ever aiming at the highest excellence; act upon christian principles and with christian views. Be not sparing in your exertions; you are not called to labor without hope of reward; you cannot eventually be losers by the utmost activity in doing good. You serve a righteous and kind master, who knows all that you do, and all that you desire to do in his service; and who will compensate your faithful exertions beyond all your expectations and your thoughts. Persevere therefore unto the end; and be assured that your christian labors shall not finally be in vain." Can words teach more plainly the doctrine of future rewards? 1 Cor. 15. 58.

4. Notice the following exhortation. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth; but for that *meat which endureth unto everlasting life;* which the son of man shall give unto you." Jesus is the speaker. The hearers are not merely the disciples but especially the multitude who had been partakers of the loaves and fishes. He directs them not to labor supremely for the possessions of this world. Why? Because they all perish in the using. For what then ought they primarily to seek? For christian goodness. Why so? Because this will endure when all earthly things are passed forever; this

will endure unto everlasting life; and will qualify its possessor for felicity in another existence. Whatever a man now acquires which can increase his felicity hereafter is the reward of his exertion. Then our Savior plainly entreated the multitude to seek especially after righteousness which they would carry with them to the future life. Can words more plainly teach the doctrine of future rewards? The remaining texts of this class must be omitted; these however appear to my mind to establish my position beyond all controversy. John, 6. 27.

III. In the third place, I will direct your attention to a class of passages which prove that future rewards are the natural consequence of obedience.

1. Read the following declaration. "For bodily exercise profiteth little; but *godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*" Paul is addressing his son Timothy. He utters a very important general truth. The practice of religion will insure more or less of the enjoyments of this world, and it will qualify you for heavenly happiness. Perhaps the whole meaning of the apostle may be made plainer by the following paraphrase. "I have been urging you to exercise yourself in the practice of true religion, to make a serious business of it, and to endure all that labor and self-denial which may be necessary to your success in it. Follow my advice, and be assured your labor will not be lost. That bodily exercise, which is necessary to success in the celebrated games of Greece, may be useful to promote health, vigor, and agility, to secure the garland of victory and the applause of nations. But these are comparatively trifling things. The rewards of true religion are infinitely superior. Health, competence, content and cheerfulness, together with the divine blessing, are the natural and the promised rewards of industry, integrity,

prudence and piety in this life; to which the revelation of the gospel annexes the grand prize of immortality. While others therefore contend for that which if obtained is at best a corruptible crown, we strive for one that is incorruptible. They labor for time, we for eternity." Does not Paul then most plainly teach future rewards for the righteous? 1 Tim. 4. 8.

2. Read the following declaration. "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; *but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.*" The meaning of this sentence is clearly and fully expressed in the following quotation. "The present state of things is transitory and evanescent, it will soon disappear and be seen no more. He that doeth the will of God shall abide forever in a state of pure and perfect happiness. He abides, that is, in a state of peace and felicity. This is the object of the promise; and this no doubt is the meaning of the apostle. Mere existence is in itself neither good nor evil. Sentient existence may be either a blessing or curse. But existence to him that hath done the will of God is an unmixed blessing. For him to live is to live to the Lord. To abide is to be happy. It is to abide in the exercise and improvement of all the noblest powers of his nature. It is to abide in the love and service of God. It is to abide in the habitual exercise of devotion and benevolence. It is to abide in the possession of all that can contribute to the felicity and improvement of a reasonable and holy being, and in the continual progress towards perfection. Let it suffice that what God hath promised he will faithfully perform." Whatever meaning then you attach to the word abide, you must admit that it implies a reward beyond this life; and a reward for the righteous, for those who have done the will of God, and not for the

disobedient. Consequently the text clearly inculcates the doctrine of future rewards. 1 John 2. 17, 28.

3. Read the following declaration. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, *blessed* are the *dead* which die in the Lord *from henceforth*. Yea, saith the spirit, that they may *rest* from their labors; and their *works do follow them.*" Who are pronounced blessed or happy? Those who die in the Lord. Why should they be called happy in distinction from the wicked? If no distinctions are to be made after death in the condition of mankind this assertion cannot be correct. But when are the holy to be happy? Is it not in their death? O no. From henceforth. Then of course it means the period of the future. And this conclusion is confirmed by the remaining part of the sentence. They rest from their persecutions, temptations, afflictions and burdensome labors; of course all this is subsequent to dissolution. And their works follow them. How can this be? Whatever goodness they have here acquired will qualify them for future happiness. This idea has been often advanced by the sacred writers, and it will serve to make plain this last expression. This is another circumstance that enables us to consider the righteous blessed or happy beyond death; and this by clear implication not being promised to those who do not die in the Lord, are not virtuous and pious, fully establishes the doctrine of future rewards. Rev. 14. 13.

4. Read the following declaration. "And being made perfect he became the *author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.*" Is Christ the author of salvation? Certainly. To whom? To those who *obey* him. This we know to be the case in this world. We plainly perceive that none but the obedient are here saved from their sins and the consequent misery. There

was no need of mentioning this fact which is known to every observer. But does not the sacred writer extend the salvation beyond the grave? O yes. He became the author of *eternal* salvation. But to whom? Although he is the author of temporal salvation only to those who obey him, yet on your scheme he should be the author of *eternal* salvation to all who have disobeyed. Is this also admitted? No. Jesus is declared to be the author of *eternal* salvation to those who *obey*. But why mention the obedient. If the conduct of this world has no connexion with the condition of the next existence, why should the obedience of this mortal life be mentioned? It is very clear that those who disobey cannot receive either temporal or eternal salvation until they reform and become obedient. Consequently the doctrine of future rewards is here plainly taught. I have quoted enough passages of this class for my present purpose. Do they not fully prove my position? Heb. 5. 9.

IV. In the fourth place, I will direct your attention to a class of passages which promise an inheritance in the future existence to the obedient disciples of Christ.

1. Listen to the following promise. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to *an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*, ready to be revealed in the last time." These are the words of Peter. They were addressed to christians. For what does he bless God? For a lively hope? Hope of what? A lasting, pure and unfading inheritance. Where is this inheritance situated? In heaven. Is it to be given to all the children of men without dis-

tinction? No. It is reserved for a particular description of persons; for obedient disciples of Jesus, or in other words for those who are kept by their faith from sinfulness and thus are prepared to secure the end of their faith, even their salvation. If it is reserved only for these, then some are not prepared to be partakers of the heavenly inheritance. Of course this is a reward for the obedience of those who persevere unto the end of life. And by what evidence is this hope confirmed? By the resurrection of Christ. The apostle then plainly teaches the doctrine of future rewards. 1 Peter, 1. 3, 5, 9.

2. Read the following promise. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men, *knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance;* for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons." Paul is here addressing the christian slaves of heathen masters. He encourages them to do right in all things by promising a reward of an inheritance. Where is this inheritance to be found? Not in this world, for if it consisted in christian goodness, they were already in possession, and consequently the present tense would have been used. He also warns them of future punishment unless they adhere to the principles and practice of the gospel. Perhaps the whole meaning of the sentence may be best conveyed by the following paraphrase. "Instead therefore of neglecting the service of your heathen masters, I call upon you to obey them with alacrity in all their lawful commands; and that not only when their eye is upon you, and from a desire to recommend yourselves unto them, but perform your work honestly as a christian duty, and from a regard to the authority of Christ. Do all that is required of you, and do it cheer-

fully; as if you were working, not for an earthly master, but for Christ himself. In a word, always consider yourselves as the servants of Christ; and whatever you are ordered to do, do it with the same alertness and zeal as if Christ had given you the command. For he is your true master; and whether your heathen masters reward you or not, he will give you ample recompense for you fidelity, and will admit you to the relation and privileges of children in the great family of which he is the head. But on the contrary, if any one neglects his proper duty, and under any pretence whatever does injury to another, he shall certainly suffer condign punishment from his impartial judge; whether he be a believer or an unbeliever, a master or a slave." Does not this passage then plainly teach the doctrine of future rewards? Col. 3. 23, 24.

3. Read the following declaration. "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, *then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*" Paul is addressing christians. Both the writer and the readers were endeavoring to live sober, righteous and godly lives. They all expected to enjoy heavenly felicity if they should persevere unto the end of their pilgrimage. The apostle here reminds his converts of the reward which would await those who imitate the example of Jesus in his sufferings. The following paraphrase will make the whole meaning plain. "Those gifts of the holy spirit, of the existence of which, though you may not yourselves possess them, you have no doubt been credibly informed, and which constitute the proper proofs of the resurrection of Christ, and of the divine original of the gospel, are the most satisfactory evidence we can possess or desire that we are taken into the new covenant, that we

ıo longer subject to the terrors of the law, and that .re adopted into the family of God, and acknow-ɔd by him as his children. And be it remembered, ;itle is not an empty name; for as on our part it im- duty and affection, so on the part of God, who con-ends to acknowledge the relation of a father, it im- an engagement to treat us as children, and particu- to provide an inheritance for us; an inheritance ar to that of which Jesus Christ, the first born son, lear elder brother, has already been put in posses-" Does not this text teach the doctrine of future .rds? Romans, 8. 16, 17.

Read the following statement. "I am Jesus whom persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet, have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make a minister and a witness both of these things which hast seen, and of those things in the which I will ar unto thee, delivering thee from the people, and the gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and the power of satan unto God, *that they may receive iveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are tified by faith that is in me.*" These are the words e risen and ascended Jesus. They were addressed ıe persecuting Saul. They contain his commission ɔ an apostle to the gentiles. He was appointed to witness to the truth of the gospel, and to be instru-tal in converting the heathen from idolatry and im-ality. But why should this work be undertaken? hat these members of the human family might obtain forgiveness of their sins which can take place only :eformation; and not only so, but an inheritance ng the saints in glory. Those who are sanctified ugh faith in Jesus are christians; and on account of r sanctification are entitled to that inheritance which

is reserved in heaven for the righteous. Thus have I quoted sufficient texts of this class to prove the doctrine of future rewards. Acts, 26. 15, 18.

V. In the fifth place, I will direct your attention to a class of passages which relate to the inspired apostles.

1. Read the following conversation. "Then answered Peter, and said unto him, behold we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake *shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.*" The Savior's meaning is still more thoroughly expressed in the following parallel passage. "And he said unto them, verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, *who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.*" One of the apostles asked what compensation they should receive for their temporal sacrifices. Our divine master gives a plain and direct answer. He assures them that their profession of his religion would expose them to severe persecutions; this is recorded by another of the evangelists, and was repeated on many other occasions. But he also declares that the real happiness arising from their principles, successes, characters and future prospects would be much greater than they could possibly have received from their earthly possessions in their unconverted state. He stops not with this life. He affirms that in the world to come they should have everlasting life or hap-

piness. Here then our Savior clearly and distinctly promises a present and future reward to his apostles and to all who embrace and honor his religion. The implication that those who do not make the necessary sacrifices and acquire the christian virtues will lose this present and future recompense is clear and striking. Perhaps you will ask if the world to come does not mean the age after the destruction of Jerusalem? Such a meaning would make the inspired Jesus utter falsehood. For some of these apostles were dead before that period, and those of his converts who survived the event suffered as great or greater persecutions than before. Consequently there is no way of avoiding the conclusion, that our Savior distinctly taught in these passages the doctrine of future rewards. Matthew 19. 27, 30. Mark 10. 28, 30. Luke 18. 29, 30.

2. Read the following declaration. "For what is our hope, or joy or crown of rejoicing? *Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?* For ye are our glory and joy." The whole meaning of Paul is well expressed in the following paraphrase. "If it should be in my power I will make another effort to visit you soon; but I may perhaps be again disappointed; and possibly in this world I may never have another opportunity of seeing you again. But there is a day advancing when we shall be sure to meet; it is the day of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. And to what think ye that I look forward with delightful anticipation, as the brightest crown, the most transporting bliss of that triumphant day? It is to the happiness of meeting you, my beloved brethren, my joy and pride, at the tribunal of our honored Lord and Judge, approved, acknowledged and rewarded by him. Yes, it is to meet never to part any more. This will be happiness indeed. And of this triumph, blessed be God, it is not in the

power of our worst and most inveterate enemies either to hinder or deprive us." It is then plain that the apostle expected to meet his converts after death. It is certain that he expected his happiness to be increased by the meeting. Why so? Because he had been instrumental in preparing them for heavenly happiness; and this would be some part of his future reward. Had he expected to meet all his persecutors and be made happy by their presence would he have omitted to mention the fact? Can words more plainly teach my doctrine? 1 Thess. 2. 19, 20. 2 Cor. 1. 14. Phil. 21. 16.

3. Read the following declaration. "*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;* while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." The idea of Paul is plain. If we improve our afflictions aright they serve to make us better. Our goodness will hereafter qualify us for greater degrees of happiness. Consequently a future reward awaits our increase in holiness. Perhaps the following paraphrase may make the meaning of the apostle still more intelligible. "If our views were limited to the present state, our afflictions and persecutions might well be regarded as both heavy and tedious. But compared with that inexpressible, incomprehensible, immeasurable mass of glory and happiness which the gospel reveals, for which these sufferings are preparing and qualifying us, and to which by the mercy of God they entitle us, all these troubles are as dust in the balance, not deserving the least attention. And this is the true cause of that habitual cheerfulness which we maintain under the pressure of severe tribulation; our regards and best affections being fixed not upon visible and sublunary objects, but upon

those which are invisible and permanent. The things of time and sense are light, transitory and evanescent, they are not worth a thought, but the invisible objects of faith have a most serious and important reality; they are subject to no interruption or vicissitude, and when once possessed they will be ours forever." This passage then plainly teaches the doctrine of future rewards. 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18.

4. Read the following declaration. "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; *henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*" Paul is addressing Timothy. He reviews his past life with satisfaction. He expects soon to depart. He feels no fear of death or eternity. He is elated with the expectation. He is confident that a crown of righteousness is laid up in heaven for him. In what this crown consists is of no consequence. He regards it as invaluable. He considers it the reward of his faithful ministry. He says it shall be given—to whom? To all mankind? No. Why is any distinction to be made hereafter? Who are to receive this crown? All who love and obey Christ. Then those who hate and disobey him have no share in this recompense. But at what day was this crown to be received? Will you say at the destruction of Jerusalem? This would make the inspired apostle utter falsehood and nonsense. For he is now ready to depart, and this is many years previous to that event. He did die long before the period of that calamity. He surely was not raised to receive any crown. No, there is no way of avoiding the conclusion, that Paul expected a reward hereafter for his fidelity on earth.

These passages are sufficient for my present purpose. 2 Tim. 4. 6, 8.

VI. In the sixth place, I will direct your attention to a class of passages which relate to Jesus Christ.

1. Read the following exhortation. "Wherefore seeing we are also encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, *who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*" The following paraphrase will convey the true meaning of the sacred writer. "I have a greater and more interesting example to propose to you than any or all that I have already mentioned. It is that of our master Jesus himself. Look, my christian friends, to our great leader; trace him from the beginning to the end of his course. He was the first to begin the career of faith, and the first to receive its reward. How did faith exert itself in him, and how was it recompensed? Confiding in the promise of God, that his reward should be proportioned to his labors and his sufferings, he endured crucifixion, he made light of the disgrace, he did not shrink from duty or from suffering; and proportioned to his faith is his honor and reward. He was raised from the dead, and is exalted to the right hand of God, to power and glory, and to be the head of his church. Shall we hesitate then to believe and to obey the gospel, when the pain and the shame to which we are exposed by it can bear no proportion to what he endured for us." You can have no doubt from this passage, that the motive of future reward animated and supported Jesus in his labors and sufferings. And what is the reward which he has received. A seat at the right hand of

God. We are exhorted from this example also to labor for a future recompense. Can language more plainly or strongly inculcate the doctrine of future rewards for the obedient? Heb. 12. 1, 2.

2. Read the following extracts. "*I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self,* with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." By putting these two passages together you readily obtain the meaning of our Savior. He rejoices that the great work committed to his charge was finished. He reverently asks for the reward of his labors. He desires to receive the glory which his Father had designed before the foundation of the world to confer on him for his successful execution of his divine mission. He wishes his apostles may be with him so as to witness the recompense of his toils and sufferings. Thus it is evident not only that he was animated with the expectation of future reward, but also that he distinctly alluded to the glory promised to him by the Father in heaven. The doctrine of future rewards then is taught not only by the example but by the solemn words of our Savior. John 17. 4, 5, 24.

3. Hear the following declaration. "*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as also I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*" Dissect this sentence and you will obtain its true meaning. The risen and ascended Jesus is the speaker. His words may be appropriately considered as addressed to all christians. To whom does he promise a reward? To all who overcome the obstacles and

temptations in the path of christian holiness. Where is this recompense to be conferred? In another life. In what is it to consist? In being permitted a place in his society. But is not this favor to be granted to all mankind without distinction? Directly the opposite is clearly implied in the promise. Where is Christ now seated? On his Father's throne. Why was this privilege granted to him? Because he overcame all obstacles in the way of holiness; and this was the reward of his persevering obedience. Consequently he teaches in his exalted state most plainly the doctrine of future rewards. Rev. 3. 21.

4. Read the following declaration. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; *and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* WHEREFORE GOD ALSO HATH HIGHLY EXALTED HIM, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." The part of this sentence which relates to the subject in discussion may be explained by the following paraphrase. "This unexampled instance of voluntary humiliation and suffering for the benefit of mankind was not left destitute of proper reward. The righteous and benevolent governor of the world, who to answer the wise purpose of his administration, imposed this severe duty upon his holy servant Jesus Christ, has in return made him ample compensation for this great act of filial obedience and magnanimous benevolence."

Nothing can be plainer than this declaration. Jesus submitted to unexampled sufferings; and as a recompense for his obedience God has highly exalted him. Can words more definitely teach the doctrine of future rewards? Heb. 12. 1, 2.

My limits will not permit me to quote any more passages in defence of my present position. I had arranged the texts which have a bearing on this question in eleven classes, and placed a larger number in each class than I have given. If what I have presented are not sufficient to convince a man, that the doctrine of future rewards is taught in the christian scriptures, then nothing that the Savior and his apostles have said can effect this object. Before I conclude the present communication I wish to ask a few plain questions.

Do you not think that our Savior and his apostles meant in some of these texts to teach the doctrine of future rewards? I put the question to your conscience. I wish you to answer it as in the presence of an omniscient judge. Let me ask you to read the whole in their connexion. Listen not to what any man may say on this important subject. Examine and decide for yourself. If you admit that even one passage declares or implies that the righteous shall be hereafter rewarded, our controversy is at an end; for we are both willing I hope to abide by the decision of scripture. How any man can deny that not one of this whole number was designed to teach the doctrine of future rewards is really more than I can understand. Not only so. If you acknowledge that the doctrine of future rewards is once taught in the christian scriptures, must you not also admit the truth of future punishment? Most certainly. This some of your wisest and best men have confessed to me in conversation. This must be evident to every

reflecting mind. I will then finish this letter by requesting you to decide the question respecting future rewards before you proceed to my next communication.

LETTER VI.

My Dear Sir,

I have selected and arranged eight classes of passages which distinctly teach or plainly imply future punishishment. My limits will not permit me to give even a brief exposition of but one of the number. This I regret the less since my next communication will contain some other texts which inculcate the same doctrine. The question at issue is not to be decided by the number of times a future retribution is recognised in the scriptures. A few undoubted instances must be as satisfactory to every sincere believer as many hundreds. In my present article then I shall confine myself to that class of passages in which the greek word *gehenna* occurs. A few preliminary remarks seem necessary to illustrate the nature of my arguments.

In the first place, you probably know that *gehenna* is a word of exclusively hebrew origin. It is made up of two other words which signify when united the *valley of Hinnom*. This valley was originally a delightful spot. It was shady and well watered. It was situated on the

east of Jerusalem. At an early period the idolatrous Jews set up the brazen image of their god Moloch. To this deity they offered children in sacrifice. The name Tophet was afterwards given to the valley. This is also a hebrew word and signifies a drum, because the wicked priests beat drums to prevent the cries of the dying children from being heard. Josiah abolished this horrid practice. He caused the place to be polluted. All the filth of the city was deposited there, and a fire kept burning so that the air might not be rendered impure and unhealthy; worms also were generated in the offal, and hence arose the phrases of unquenchable fire, and undying worms. So far there is no disagreement.

Now the learned commentators of all denominations contend, that the name of this loathsome, and fiery, and wormy valley, was afterwards used as an emblem of the future punishment of the wicked. They contend that our Savior used gehenna to signify the torment which awaited the sinful in another existence. This opinion was generally received as true until one who is now a member of your body denied its correctness. He endeavored to show that no such change had taken place in the meaning of the word. He aimed to prove that gehenna must be taken in its literal sense, as a place of temporal punishment near Jerusalem. Unitarians considered the doctrine of future retribution firmly established without a reference to this class of passages; they took little or no notice of the work, and very few of the denomination have perused it even to this day. Those who examined for themselves stated that the investigation of the subject was superficial, the reasoning inconclusive and many of the arguments irrelevant, and deemed it unworthy of any public notice. When I commenced my preparation for the present letters I did not think much space could be allotted to this part of

the discussion. On examination however I became convinced that your view of the word was altogether erroneous, and concluded to bring forward such evidence as seemed to settle this controversy beyond all doubt. The results of a thorough investigation will now be submitted to your candid consideration.

I. In the first place, I will state some of my reasons for rejecting your definition of the greek term *gehenna*. You know that this word was used eleven times by our Savior and once by the apostle James. All valuable commentators affirm that Jesus employed the word as an emblem of the spiritual punishment of the wicked both in this world and the next existence. This is the view I take of the subject and the one which I shall attempt to defend. You contend that gehenna was used to denote a place of literal punishment, in this world alone, out of the city of Jerusalem. Some of the arguments for rejecting your meaning of the word I will now mention.

1. I reject your definition of gehenna because it makes our blessed Savior utter nonsense and falsehood. Look at the several passages in which he employs the word. The following is the first instance. "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the *judgment;* but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the *judgment;* and whosoever shall say to his brother, raca, shall be in danger of the *council;* but whosoever shall say thou fool, shall be in danger of the *gehenna of fire.*" Here you perceive that our Savior mentions three degrees of punishment, the judgment, the council, the gehenna. Now the question is simply this. Did our Savior mean literal and temporal punishment as you contend, or did he mean figurative and spiritual as I believe? He could not mean literal punishment. For

the Jews had no law for punishing a person for unreasonable anger; and I defy you or any other man to produce a single case in which such an offence was ever punished by the jewish tribunal called the *judgment;* consequently no disciple was in any danger of a literal punishment by this court on account of anger. The Jews had no law for punishing a person for calling another raca; and I challenge you or any other individual to mention a single instance in which such a crime was ever punished by the jewish tribunal called the *council;* and consequently no hearer of our Savior was in the least danger of a literal punishment by this court for using such words. The Jews had no law for punishing a man for calling his brother fool; and I defy you to produce a single example in which they punished any breach of their laws by burning in the valley of Hinnom; and consequently no one of those our Savior addressed were in danger of being thus punished for any crime whatever. Now is it likely he was totally ignorant of the jurisprudence of his own nation? Is it not probable that his hearers would have ridiculed him to his face for manifesting such ignorance had they understood him to mean literal punishment. Not only so. Your definition of gehenna makes our Savior contradict himself in the same sentence. He first avers that the Jews consider nothing to be murder but the outward act; and that this offence was condemned to no heavier penalty than what the judgment could inflict. Had he then declared that whoever cherished unreasonable anger would be exposed to the literal judgment, or literal council, or literal fire, would he not have contradicted his former assertion? But this is not all. You make our Savior threaten his hearers with punishments of which they were in no possible danger, and this must have been perfectly well understood by all present. Conse-

quently they must have received his meaning according to my exposition. He meant that the torment of inimical and revengeful feelings must be as severe as the punishments which could be inflicted in three several methods. And when he used the word gehenna he extended the sufferings beyond the grave, as this word was then employed to denote the future misery of the wicked, which I shall soon prove. Thus you see your definition of gehenna makes our Savior utter nonsense and falsehood. Matthew 5. 22.

Take a second class of passages. "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into gehenna. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into gehenna." How can you reconcile this sentence with your view of gehenna? What connexion would the cutting off an offending member have with being burnt in the valley of Hinnom? What court had authority to inflict this kind of punishment on account of a person's being led into sin by his right eye? Can you possibly understand this in a literal sense? Surely not. The Jews had no laws relating to such offences. There was no manner of danger from a literal burning. And this must have been known both to the preacher and hearers. Now my definition of the word makes our Savior consistent, wise and benevolent. Matthew 5. 29, 30; 18. 9; Mark 9. 43, 45.

Take a third class of passages. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in gehenna." What can you make of this verse on your system? What more than the body could

be destroyed by burning in the valley of Hinnom? Call the soul what you please, still it must mean something which no human tribunal could destroy, in order to make our Savior utter any truth or wisdom. If then you say that gehenna here means the valley of Hinnom, the meaning of the sentence amounts to nothing more than this. Fear not him who can kill you in one way, but fear him who can destroy you in another. Could such nonsense proceed from the inspired Jesus? Not only so. He had been exhorting his disciples to boldness and perseverance in proclaiming the gospel; and if your definition of gehenna be the true one, he exhorted them to take the most direct course to incur the hatred of the jewish rulers, and the highest punishment which they could inflict. His language then amounts simply to this. Leap into danger of gehenna with your eyes open, yet entertain the greatest dread of him who has the power of casting you in thither. Make it morally certain that you shall suffer the punishment of gehenna, and yet do all you can to avoid it. Did the Savior preach such nonsense and falsehood? Surely not. Give the true exposition of the passage and his instructions appear clear, striking, rational and consistent. Matthew 10. 28; Luke 12. 5.

Take a fourth class of passages. "Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of gehenna than yourselves." The scribes and pharisees use great zeal to make proselytes. When they have made one he is doubly deserving the punishment of gehenna. Then according to your definition he ought to be burned twice in the valley of Hinnom. You will recollect, however, that these words were addressed directly to the scribes and pharisees. Now the scribes were magistrates and

the pharisees the ruling party; consequently they had in their own power all the punishment. If the burning of criminals was then practised they would be the last to incur such a judgment. This rendering then will not bear in this particular instance surely; so that you must give another meaning to gehenna in order to make any sense or truth of our Savior's words. Matthew 23. 15.

Take a fifth example. "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of gehenna." Will your definition bear in this sentence? Not at all. It was utterly impossible for the scribes and pharisees to incur any punishment which the jewish nation would inflict, let them be ever so guilty. Consequently they were in no more danger of being burned in the valley of Hinnom than of being drowned in the then unknown valley of the Mississippi. But this verse is manifestly addressed to men in real danger of gehenna, whatever it might be. The scribes and pharisees were then at the summit of whatever temporal power the Jews at that time possessed. Is it to be supposed that in all these instances our Savior either meant nothing at all, or mentioned a fire of which they were not in the least possible danger? Matthew 23. 33.

Look also at the passage from James. "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of gehenna." Does the writer mean to declare, that the human tongue is literally set on fire of the valley of Hinnom? Surely not. A passage from one of the jewish writers will illustrate the meaning of this verse. "A crafty tongue with coals of juniper, which were lighted in the infernal gehenna." Another author has this sentence. "I above, thou beneath. I from above will

scatter arrows upon evil tongues, thou from beneath shall cast up coals upon them." James 3. 6.

I have thus briefly noticed the passages in which the word gehenna is contained. Do you not clearly perceive that your definition makes our Savior utter nonsense and falsehood in almost every instance? Is it not perfectly plain that your exposition does not bear in a single instance? I ask you to look for yourself. I could have made my remarks much more prolix, but the several cases seemed so perfectly clear that I could not feel willing to occupy your time with more objections. Believing as I do that Jesus spoke nothing but the most important truth, I must reject an interpretation which renders many of his solemn sayings so ridiculous and absurd.

Perhaps you may now say, that our Savior alluded to the destruction of Jerusalem; that those who were not converted to christianity would then be burnt alive in the valley of Hinnom. If he uttered such an idea he declared what never took place. I am not willing therefore to accuse him of falsehood. Many of those he addressed were dead long before the calamity befel the city. And those who perished at the time were not taken and burned outside its walls. So that there is not the least shadow of evidence for such a definition. Give your meaning in the passages in which gehenna occurs, and it destroys all the sense and connexion, makes our Savior a fool or a liar; and surely this is a sufficient reason for rejecting your exposition.

2. My second reason for rejecting your definition of gehenna is this. The word evidently denotes some kind of punishment in all the instances in which our Savior used it. Now we have no evidence that the valley of Hinnom was a place of punishment in the time of our Savior and his apostles. We have satisfactory proof to

the contrary. No instance of punishment in that place and at that period is recorded in the New Testament or any other book. You never find any persons but Christ and his apostle using the word. Our Savior mentions various kinds of trial to which his apostles would be liable; but he mentions gehenna in this connexion but once; and he then uses the word in such a manner that you plainly perceive he could not mean corporal punishment, since he had just spoken of killing the body as a matter of no consequence. The apostles never speak of themselves as in any danger of being burned in the valley of Hinnom; and the Jews never threaten either them or their master with such punishment. Consequently I cannot possibly believe that our Savior meant a literal, temporal punishment in the valley of Hinnom when he used the word gehenna.

3. My third reason for rejecting your definition of gehenna is this. You have no evidence that a perpetual fire was kept up in the valley of Hinnom at the time our Savior was on earth. I know that a statement of this kind has been often repeated. I have often done it myself. I supposed the authors in which I found the account were to be trusted. I find this is not the case in this instance. An assertion to this effect was made by Rabbi Kimchi who flourished about the fourteenth century. If there is any other evidence for the truth of the story I have not discovered it; and surely this is not sufficient to satisfy any reasoning mind. Until further proof is produced I shall therefore strenuously deny that any perpetual fire existed in the valley of Hinnom in the time of our Savior. And if this be the fact, then he could not possibly have used the word gehenna in the sense you suppose.

4. My fourth reason for rejecting your definition of gehenna is this. All the truly qualified biblical critics

from the earliest days of research to the present time have given a different exposition. They have investigated the subject thoroughly. They have had no interest whatever to deceive. If the evidence had been sufficient to convince them that gehenna meant a literal, temporal punishment, they would have declared this opinion with all readiness. I cannot therefore believe that such numbers of honest men could have been so long and so universally mistaken on this question. I might advance many more reasons for my rejection of your definition of gehenna did my limits permit. I have however said sufficient for all present purposes. I hope you will give them a candid consideration.

II. In the second place, I will mention a few reasons for believing that our Savior used gehenna to mean spiritual punishment both in this life and the world to come.

1. This is the testimony of the jewish writers of antiquity. I go to their writings to ascertain the exact meaning of a hebrew word in their day, and for no other purpose. I have nothing to do with their theology or religious sentiments. There is no other sure method of arriving at the truth on this question, as every biblical critic will admit. What works then have we to which reference can be made in this controversy. We have the *Targums* and the *Talmuds*. As you may not know much about these writings I will give you a brief but accurate statement respecting their origin and history.

What then are the Targums? They are chaldee paraphrases on different portions of the Old Testament. In the first place there is the Targum Ben Uzziel. This is a paraphrastic commentary on the prophets. The author was the chief disciple of Hillel the elder, who flourished in Jerusalem within thirty years of Christ. There can be no doubt of the genuineness

and authenticity of this work. In proof of these we have first the testimony of all the later jewish writers. We have second the entire absence of all anachronisms; that is, there is nothing which bears the stamp of a later date; there is no reference to names or events of a subsequent period; and this is a very strong ground of evidence, especially when you consider that the names of contemporary persons, of places, of allusions to local circumstances, are constantly occurring in all the Targums. I know a certain writer has asserted that this Targum was not quoted by the christian fathers for the first four centuries. Admit the fact for the sake of argument, and this objection is readily answered. First, these christian writers did not understand the chaldee, with the exception of Jerome. Second, Jerome learned it late in life, and *complains* that his knowledge of it was very superficial and imperfect. Third, the Jews were exceedingly backward in communicating any of their learning to christians. This is evident from the fact that the Rabbins whom Jerome hired to assist him in his hebrew studies came by night to avoid offending their brethren. Fourth, the Jews had special reasons for caution in communicating the contents of this book to the christians; for it explains many of the prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the Messiah in the same way in which believers then did and now do. There is no reasonable doubt in the minds of those who have had time and ability to investigate this subject, that Jonathan, the author of the Targum on the prophets, was either a few years prior to Christ, or contemporary with him. Of course his writings furnish the very best authority we could desire or can possibly have, for ascertaining the meaning of the word gehenna in the time of our Savior.

In the second place, there is the Targum of Joseph

the blind. This author flourished about three hundred years after Christ. He was a teacher of the law at Babylon. He was peculiarly skilled in the Hagiography. Many disciples resorted to his school. They wrote down his explanations and remarks. The Targum which bears his name is probably a collection of extracts from their manuscripts with their comments. Its style shows it to be the work of several different hands. Now this work has a peculiar value in our present inquiry on this very account; for it shows not merely the opinion of the teacher but the views of his pupils in relation to the meaning of gehenna.

In the third place, there is the Jerusalem Targum. This must have been written as late as the sixth century, because events are referred to, and geographical names are inserted, which could not have had an earlier date; but it could not have been composed at a much later period. Its authority however may be regarded as great, for it consists principally of extracts from earlier Targums and other jewish writings. In fact there is such a coincidence between many passages of this Targum and passages in the New Testament, that some critics have supposed it was extant in the time of Christ. There is of course not the least shadow of probability in supposing that the compilers of this Targum quoted from the christian scriptures, a book which they utterly detested. We must then allow this Targum an authority on this question equal to the New Testament, or else suppose it to have been compiled in part from documents extant in the time of Christ, which is the same thing for my argument. On either hypothesis this Targum is of great value in determining the meaning that was given to hebrew words in the days of our Savior. I have said sufficient on the Targums for all present purposes.

Let me now offer a few explanatory remarks respecting the Talmuds. In the first place there is the Jerusalem Talmud. Rabbi Judah Hakkadesh resided at Tiberias in Palestine about the year two hundred. He made or published a collection of the traditions of the Jewish doctors, in order to preserve them from being lost in the dispersion of the Jews and the interruption of the schools. This collection was termed the *mishna*, or second law. About a century afterwards Rabbi Jochanan lived in Palestine. He prepared a *gemara*, that is a filling up or completion of the mishna. This is at once a commentary on the mishna and also a supplement to it. The mishna and the gemara constitute the Jerusalem Talmud.

In the second place there is the Babylonish Talmud. This is much larger than the other. It is also much more known, and much more commonly used. It is composed of Rabbi Judah's mishna, and a gemara prepared at Babylon, perhaps as early as the year four hundred, and certainly not more than a century later. But as both these Talmuds are composed chiefly of sayings and writings much older than the date of their compilation, they are good authority for ascertaining the meaning of hebrew words at a much earlier period. I think these notices are sufficient for all present purposes.

Now I wish you to understand distinctly the use I am about to make of these hebrew writings of antiquity. I do not search them to ascertain what the Jews believed concerning future retribution. No. Their opinions weigh nothing with me in this controversy. I go to them for the express purpose of learning what meaning the jewish nation gave to the word *gehenna* in the days of our Savior and immediately after. He was born of jewish parents, and would use language as understood

by his brethren according to the flesh, unless he signified to the contrary. This he has not done in the present instance. Now this is the only true and sure way of coming at the real meaning of words in any language. Let me give you an illustration. You find the word *atonement* but once in our English translation of the christian scriptures. You wish to know what meaning was attached to this term in the time of the translators. How can you determine this question? By examining other books which were written near that period. You take the plays of Shakspeare. You there find the word thus divided, *at-one-ment*. This shows you that the people of that day meant by the word atonement, reconciliation, bringing together those who were at variance, making them one. Now I am about to pursue a similar course in relation to the word gehenna; and all judges of this subject will assure you there is no other certain way of arriving at its true meaning.

In the first place, take a few extracts from the Targum of Jonathan. Read the following declaration. "Abram saw gehenna belching forth smoke and burning coals, and sending up sparks to punish the wicked therein." Surely he did not see the valley of Hinnom, for this would make him witness what no one pretends took place until a thousand years after his time. Hear the following remark. "The wicked are to be judged, that they may be delivered to eternal burning in gehenna." This surely cannot refer to the valley of Hinnom. Very many passages occur in which the wicked are threatened with the punishment of gehenna. But you want only those which clearly prove that future punishment was intended. Listen then to the three following sentences. "Like embers in the fire of gehenna which God created the second day of the creation of the world." "The earth from which springs forth food,

and beneath which is gehenna, the cold of whose snow is changed so as to become like fire." "Thou shalt see them descending into the earth to gehenna." Thus have I given you five extracts from this jewish writer who lived about twenty or thirty years before Christ. They plainly prove that he considered gehenna a place or state of future punishment for the wicked. They are comments on the following passages of scripture. Isa. 33. 14, 17. Cant. 8. 6. Job. 38. 5. Wolf's Bibliotheca Hebræ, Part II. pp. 1159—60. Wetstein's N. T. on Matthew 5. 22. Bartoloccius Bibliotheca Rabbinica, Part II. p. 136.

In the second place, take an example from *Medrasch Thillium*, an allegorical exposition of the Psalms ascribed to Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph, who was born the first year of the Christian era. These are his words. "Circumcision is regarded with favor; for the holy and blessed swear to Abram that no one who was circumcised should descend into gehenna." This cannot mean the valley of Hinnom. Wetstein Mat. 3. 9. Bartoloccius Part IV. pp. 272, 320.

In the third place, take a few specimens from the *Pierche Eliezer*, written by Eliezert he great, whose wife was great grand-daughter to that Simeon who took the infant Jesus in his arms. He flourished about the year seventy-three. These are his sayings. "On account of the sabbath Adam was delivered from the condemnation of gehenna." "Whosoever confesses his transgressions and forsakes them is delivered from the condemnation of gehenna." "The holy and blessed God has dealt with me in truth and goodness, and delivered me from the condemnation of gehenna." "All angels and seraphim shall not deliver the wicked from the condemnation of gehenna." You see that in all these cases gehenna is evidently used to denote future punish-

ment. Bartoloccius. Part I. pp. 184, 5. Part IV. Chronological Index. Wetstein. Mat. 23, 33.

In the fourth place, take a few instances from *Beraschith Rabba*, which was written by Rabbi Hoschiakia. He flourished about the year ninety five. These are the sayings. "Hereafter Abram will sit at the gates of gehenna, and will suffer no circumcised Israelite to descend thither; but what will he do with those who have sinned beyond measure? He will restore to them their foreskin, and they will descend into gehenna." "Before paradise gehenna was created; gehenna on the second day, paradise on the third day. This is the edge of the sword which turns every way, and which being directed towards them hereafter sets them on fire." "In that hour gehenna ascends upon the wicked. Woe to the world on account of the judgments thereof." Wetstein. Mat. 3. 9; 5. 22; 23. 33. Luke 16. 22. Bartoloccius, Part II. pp. 778, 82, 134.

In the fifth place, take one example from *Maase Thora*, ascribed to Rabbi Hakkodesh who was born about the year one hundred and twenty. These are the words. "God admitted Hiram king of Tyre into paradise, because he had built the temple, and had been from the first a pious man; and he lived in paradise a thousand years; but when afterwards he began to be filled with pride and made himself a deity, he was expelled from paradise and descended into gehenna." Wetstein. Luke 23. 43. Wolf. Biblioth. Heb. Part II. p. 839. Bartoloccius Part III. p. 773.

In the sixth place, take a few passages from the *Talmuds*. I will give them in the order they occur in the original works. Look then to the following examples. "For those who observe the law, Paradise is prepared, but for transgressors, gehenna." Does this refer to this world or the next. "While you apply yourselves with

the greatest labor and trouble to the study of the law, and yet neglect to fulfil it, you will become heirs of gehenna at your death, while you have enjoyed no pleasure in this life." This admits of no doubt. "Heretics, traitors, apostates, epicurians, those who deny the law, and those who deny the resurrection of the dead, those who separate themselves from the doctrines of the congregation, and those who cause terror among the dwellers upon earth, and those who have sinned and caused many to sin, as Jeroboam the son of Nebat and his companions; these all descend into gehenna and are punished therein ages of ages, as it is written. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." This surely extends the meaning to a future world. "That ungodly man, Turnus Rufus, asked Rabbi Akiba, if your God loves the poor, why does he not feed them? He replied, in order that we may be delivered through them from the judgment of gehenna." "Whoever carefully celebrates the three feasts to be instituted every sabbath is delivered from three calamities, namely, from the distress at the coming of the Messiah, from the judgment of gehenna, and from the war of gog and magog." "God will redeem my soul from condemnation to gehenna, and he has delivered my body from condemnation to gehenna." "God hath set the one against the other, that is, gehenna and paradise." "You will escape the judgment of gehenna, and your portion will be with Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah." "The fire of gehenna does not prevail against the sinners of Israel so as to consume them, but they are sent down into it to be frightened and scorched awhile on account of their evil deeds; afterwards Abraham, who kept all the commandments and

went down into the fire of the Chaldeans to sanctify the name of God, descends thither, and through his merits brings them forth from thence that he may establish the promise of the covenant." I could extend my quotations to an indefinite number; but sufficient have been presented for all necessary purposes. Wetstein. Mat. 3. 9; 5. 22; 28. 15, 33; Luke 23. 43; Bartoloccius Part I. p. 143, 148, 138, 133.

You learn from these various quotations that gehenna was used by the Jews at and after the times of our Savior to mean future punishment for the wicked. That he used the word in the same sense there can be no doubt in the minds of sound critics. The only objection you will be likely to make to this conclusion may be thus stated. You may ask if there is any degree of probability that our Lord and his apostles knew any thing about the Targums? I have already furnished you some evidence on this question; and I may remark that those scholars who have given this subject a thorough investigation have a firm belief that some of these hebrew writings were then in existence. I will present one or two considerations which seem satisfactory to my mind.

In the first place, it appears that the Jews had lost their national language, the Hebrew, after the return from the captivity, since you find that Ezra was obliged to employ interpreters, while he read the law to the people. Their original language had become so corrupted during their residence in Babylon, and so intermingled with the Chaldaic, which was the language in common use in that region, that they could not understand the Hebrew scriptures without interpreters. From this period the Syro Chaldaic continued to be the established national language of the Jews. Of course, none but the learned would be able to understand the Hebrew scriptures, without the constant aid of interpreters. To the

common people therefore the scriptures would be a sealed book, except on holydays when they might hear them expounded by those who had studied the hebrew. But the great multiplication of synagogues throughout Judea and Galilee would render necessary a correspondence in the number of interpreters, unless some translation was made of the scriptures into the vulgar tongue. What more natural than that such translations should be made for the benefit both of the synagogue and of private families, and that they should be generally used? We certainly should expect it. Suppose there were no copies of the bible to be had in our country, except in the hebrew and greek languages in which they were originally written. Suppose that none but a few learned men were able to read the scriptures and that the people were obliged to content themselves with hearing a short passage translated from the pulpit on sundays. Would this satisfy the people? Would they not be likely to get some man of education to write a translation and commentary which they could read for themselves? Now the Jews regarded it as being much more important to be thoroughly acquainted with the scriptures than we do. It was the practice to commit them to memory, so that Josephus says, "For our people, if any body do but ask any one of them about our laws, he will more readily tell them all, than he will tell his own name; and this in consequence of our having learned them immediately as soon as ever we became sensible of any thing; and of our having them as it were engraven on our souls." Seeing then that the Jews regarded the scriptures as being of such importance that they committed them to memory, is it not altogether probable that they would generally wish to have a copy of them in a language which they could understand? Is it at all probable that

they would be content merely to hear a passage read from them occasionally in the synagogue?

But in the second place, we have positive evidence that there were translations of the scriptures in common use among the Jews in our Savior's time. In addition to the books of the Old Testament, the Jews had a collection, oral, of laws or traditions, as they were called, which had been handed down for many ages from father to son, until finally, about one hundred and ninety years after the time of Christ, they were committed to writing, and received the name of *mischna*, under which name they have come down to us. Now on turning to the mischna, we find it plainly intimated that there were translations, or Targums, of the scriptures in common use among the Jews, at least as early as the time when the mischna was composed, (Targum is a chaldee word meaning translation,) and that is, even before the time of Christ, since Christ himself often speaks of the traditions of the Jews, and it is of these traditions, as has been remarked, that the mischna is made up. You will keep in mind that I never refer to these traditions for proof of a religious doctrine, but simply to ascertain the use of a hebrew word at that period. It was one of these traditions, as laid down in the mischna that "all sacred books ought to be preserved from fire, whether they are read in or not; *and whatsoever language they are writ in*, they ought to be laid up carefully." This plainly implies that the Jews had their sacred books in more languages than one, in at least one other language besides the hebrew. But no one pretends th at at this time there were any translations of the hebrew scriptures in existence besides the greek and chaldaic. The greek translation, or the Septuagint, was used by those Jews who lived in foreign countries, and by them the traditions were never receiv-

ed nor acknowledged to be of any sort of authority. It is evident then that in the passage which has been referred to the chaldaic Targums must have been meant. I can see no room for further doubt on this subject. Here then you have one grand reason for my definition of the word gehenna. It was uniformly used by the Jews in the time of our Savior and in succeeding ages to mean future punishment. I know of no other way of arriving at the true meaning of hebrew words and phrases.

I have not room to mention at length other reasons for my belief, many of which might be stated if the argument required. I will however observe, that my definition of gehenna seems absolutely necessary in almost every passage in which the word occurs to make our Savior utter either sense or truth, or be consistent with himself. This you can readily ascertain by an examination of the several verses already quoted. I would further remark, that I cannot believe all commentators of note, of every denomination, who have had no special interests to serve, could have been mistaken in the meaning of this hebrew word. They have spent months and even years in studies connected with this question; they had no cause at heart but truth; they were qualified for such investigations; and on the common grounds of judging their conclusions are not to be shaken without preponderating evidence on the other side. This never has and never can be produced. Not only so. The common meaning of gehenna makes our Savior's instructions consistent with themselves. He has spoken of a heaven for the righteous. Now the mode of interpretation which makes gehenna mean the valley of Hinnom would require that we look either to the garden of Eden or to the starry firmament for heaven, and confine the meaning of heavenly felicity to the present life. I

think enough has been said to satisfy all candid inquirers that the common definition of this word is altogether the correct one; and consequently that our Savior threatened future punishment to the wicked.

III. In the third place, I will answer the objections which may be made to my definition of the word gehenna. I shall notice all which I think can have the least weight with candid inquirers after truth.

1. Perhaps you will affirm, that neither gehenna nor any other word is used in the hebrew scriptures to denote a place of endless misery for the wicked. This I readily grant. I admit that neither the doctrine of a future existence, nor the fact of a future retribution, is taught with distinctness and in a formal manner in the five books of Moses; but that the Jews of those days had some faint belief in both there can be no doubt. I also acknowledge that the evidence in support of these sentiments is not full and striking in the subsequent writing of the Old Testament. But what do these admissions prove in favor of your position? Just nothing at all. You must grant that the great majority of the jewish nation in the time of our Savior had a decided belief in both a future life and future retribution. And I have given you the outline of the testimony which has convinced those who have given this subject a thorough investigation, that gehenna was used to teach future punishment for the wicked in the time of Christ's personal ministry. So that your objection has no direct application to the question in controversy, and is satisfactorily refuted by the evidence presented.

2. Perhaps you may affirm, that gehenna occurs but twelve times in the christian scriptures, and is the only word which is supposed to mean a place or state of misery for the wicked. I admit that the word gehenna occurs but twelve times in the New Testament. But

does this admission prove the truth of your position? By no means. If our Savior has taught the doctrine of future retribution in but one sentence in the whole of his teachings, I am perfectly satisfied; for I cannot believe he was ignorant of the truth on this question; neither can I allow that he uttered even one falsehood. And surely any believer in revelation ought to bow in profound submission to a doctrine twelve times distinctly declared. Did he teach the idea of Providence on as many different occasions? Did he even assert the existence of his Father in a dozen discourses? Examine the records for yourself. But I do not admit that gehenna is the only word used in the christian scriptures to mean future punishment for the wicked. I find this solemn truth under different phraseology in very many other passages, some of which will be noticed in my next communication. And I am willing to confess that the removal of gehenna from the controversy would not shake my belief in the doctrine of a future retribution. I confine my remarks to this word in the present letter because I considered the argument on the topic perfectly satisfactory and conclusive. So that your objection in this instance is fairly answered.

3. Perhaps you will affirm, that the word gehenna is used only by our Savior and James, and ask why it was not mentioned by the other apostles? I am able to return a most satisfactory answer to your question, while I admit the truth of your assertion. Gehenna was a word which the Jews of Judea understood. To these our Savior addressed his discourses; and James wrote his epistles to converts from the same body. Some to whom the apostles preached, and to whom several of the epistles were partly addressed, were indeed of jewish extraction. But then they had been educated in foreign countries. They used the Greek language.

They knew little or nothing of the colloquial usages of Judea. They were acquainted with the Old Testament only through the Septuagint. Consequently the apostles, if possessed of the true spirit of gospel ministers, would not use a word which some of their hearers or readers could not understand. All these were firm believers in future retribution before and after their conversion, and consequently had no special need of elementary instruction on this doctrine. This then is the very best reason in the world why the other inspired teachers did not use the word gehenna. They could not use it to mean future punishment when addressing such believers with any more propriety than I could use the word hell to convey the same idea to a congregation of Germans. You will please to remember that the question is not whether the same word is always used, but whether the same doctrine is taught throughout the New Testament; and that this is the fact I shall fully prove. I seldom use the word hell in my discourses, but I preach future punishment for the wicked as distinctly as our orthodox brethren, who repeat the word hell in every sentence. Here then is a full refutation of your objection.

4. Perhaps you will affirm, that the word gehenna is not once used in addressing the gentiles, and ask the cause of this omission. I admit the truth of your affirmation, and will give you a convincing answer to your question. Gehenna is a word of hebrew origin. They understood neither this ancient language nor had heard of the meaning this word had acquired among the inhabitants of Judea. Consequently it would have been talking or writing an unknown tongue to have reminded them of the gehenna fire. Suppose a missionary should address a society of converted Indians in their native dialect. Would he use the word hell when he wished

to mention future punishment? By no means. And were not the inspired preachers possessed of common sense? If so they could not use gehenna when speaking or writing to heathen or converts from heathenism. All these believed already in future rewards and punishments, and only needed confirmation in their present belief. Consequently your objection has no weight against my argument.

5. Perhaps you will affirm, that the greater part of what our Savior said concerning gehenna was addressed to his disciples, and ask why he did not say more on the subject to the unbelieving Jews, if the word meant future misery? The truth of your assertion I admit, and will return a satisfactory answer to your question. To whom were most of his discourses addressed? To his disciples surely. To whom were his doctrines entrusted? Who were selected to propagate his gospel? And to whom was the greater portion of all his intructions on every subject delivered? To his disciples certainly. Why then should he make a distinction on this question? But, my dear sir, he did preach gehenna to the unbelieving Jews; and the different manner in which he declared this doctrine to the two classes of hearers fully establishes the truth of my exposition. Mark this peculiarity. When addressing his disciples he speaks of gehenna as something they might avoid by being his faithful disciples. Now if gehenna means a literal, temporal punishment, the very way to be exposed to it was by embracing his religion, and thus exciting the anger of the Jews. But if the word means future punishment, then surely they might escape by being righteous and holy. On the other hand, when he addressed the unbelieving Jews he uses language like the following. "How can *ye* escape the damnation of gehenna." Now if gehenna meant a literal, temporal punishment, these Jews were

in no danger of suffering it; for they were the ruling party, and of course would not condemn themselves to death by fire; and at the destruction of Jerusalem the Roman enemies did not burn any individuals outside of the city; according to your definition of the word therefore our Savior threatened them with a punishment to which they were not exposed, and would never suffer. But if you give the common meaning to gehenna his words are literally true. These unbelieving and persecuting Jews were in danger of future punishment from their very wickedness. So that this objection turns against yourself with tenfold power.

6. Perhaps you will affirm, that in all the places in which gehenna is used, the persons addressed are supposed to be acquainted with its meaning. This I readily grant. When the word hell is now mentioned we uniformly understand future misery. This was not the original meaning of the term by any means. This was not the exclusive meaning in the time our present translation of the bible was made. In the episcopal prayer book you read that Jesus descended to *hell.* Did the framers of the liturgy understand by this word a state of torment? Certainly not, as you may learn from their writings of the period. So it was with gehenna. It was originally used to mean the valley of Hinnom. But in the time of our Savior it was as generally understood to mean future punishment as the word hell is now supposed to convey the same idea. This I have already proved by satisfactory evidence. But there is one argument which may be mentioned in this connexion. It was our Savior's boldness in threatening the self-righteous pharisees with misery beyond the grave which so excited their anger and enmity. Consequently the admission of your objection furnishes another proof in favor of my position.

7. Perhaps you will affirm, that if gehenna means future punishment, the apostles never preached it to Jews or Gentiles. I admit that they used not this word, but it by no means follows that they never preached future punishment. They indeed omitted the word gehenna, and for the best reasons possible. Most of their discourses recorded in the book of Acts were not preached in Judea, where the meaning of the word would be easily understood. Besides there were doubtless more or fewer proselytes and heathen in almost every congregation, and the inspired teachers were too wise to use a word which they knew even one of their hearers could not feel. Not only so. There was no dispute on the subject of future retribution, for all believed this doctrine. Other topics engrossed their attention. So that a knowledge of the circumstances removes this objection entirely. Now you will remember that our principal concern in this controversy is, with doctrines and not words; and if the apostles recognised the belief then existing in future rewards and punishments, it is as much to my purpose as if they had used the word gehenna a hundred times. And that they did preach this doctrine to both Jews and Gentiles, either directly or by implication, I shall fully prove.

8. Perhaps you will affirm, that gospel salvation is salvation from sin, and not salvation from gehenna. The first part of your statement is correct, and the latter part incorrect. Sin and its consequences are the principal causes of misery in this world; and I believe they are the only causes of punishment in another existence. When a person therefore is free from sin and its consequences he is saved from spiritual wretchedness. Paul speaks in a passage I have already quoted of some of his converts being already saved, and on this account they would be hereafter saved from wrath

or torment. Consequently he plainly taught that salvation from sin would secure salvation from future misery. And our Savior plainly taught the same doctrine in those very passages in which he uses the word gehenna. Yes; he assures his disciples, that unless they avoided certain sins, sins which could not come under the cognizance of human laws, they were in danger of gehenna. Salvation from these sins would then save them from gehenna. He told them to fear not any punishment man could inflict, and on your ground man could burn them to death in gehenna fire; but to fear him who could cast them after death into gehenna. According to the infallible teacher therefore salvation from those very sins which no human tribunal could punish would save them from gehenna and future wrath. Now does he not declare that some of mankind would not be saved from their sinfulness? Do not the apostles urge men to work out their salvation with fear and trembling? Do they not ask them how they can escape if they neglect so great salvation? Were they in no danger of losing christian salvation? Are not faith and repentance frequently mentioned as unalterable conditions of christian salvation? Now so long as sin exists misery must continue, and even longer, as you can testify. So long as there are those whom Jesus has not saved from wickedness, so long there must be punishment. That many leave this world in an unsaved condition you will not deny. Consequently they need salvation from sin hereafter before they can be saved from misery. So that this objection is directly opposed to your own doctrine.

9. Perhaps you will affirm, that neither the hebrew, greek nor english languages had originally any name for a place of future punishment. Suppose I should admit the truth of this declaration, what would you

gain in your argument? Just nothing at all. I can assert also that neither of these tongues had originally any name for a place of future reward. But does this destroy the truth of the doctrine? Surely not. You well know that all the nations which have spoken these several languages have believed in both future rewards and punishments from time immemorial. If our judges should condemn fifty pirates to be hung and omit to name any place of execution, would this prove that the sentence could never be executed? Ridiculous. Now you know that in the infancy of language sensible objects, processes and operations are the only ones to which names are usually given. In every language spiritual ideas are expressed by words which originally related to material objects; and which when first employed to denote things unseen and spiritual were used metaphorically. This is the fact in relation to paradise, heaven, gehenna and the like in other languages. So that this weak objection is fully refuted.

10. Perhaps you will affirm, that gehenna was originally used to mean the valley of Hinnom, and ask when its meaning changed to future punishment? I admit your assertion, and will answer your question by asking another. The word paradise was originally used to denote an earthly garden. The word heaven was first employed to mean the space over our heads. When did their meaning change to a place or state of future happiness? Because you cannot give a satisfactory solution to this inquiry does it follow that there is no happiness beyond the grave? Surely not. Then if the precise period cannot be fixed when the meaning of gehenna was changed, does this prove that it never has been changed? Absurd. When the english translation of the bible was executed, the word *villian* was applied to Paul and the other apostles. Its common meaning at

that day was servant. Can you tell me when it was changed to denote a vile scoundrel? Such objections then are utterly futile. It is enough that we have the evidence that a change had taken place in the meaning of the word gehenna in the time of our Savior.

11. Perhaps you will affirm, that if the jewish meaning be given to gehenna, it will prove a material hell. Not at all. This is one mode of infidel attack upon our religion. They say the jewish writers describe God as possessed of human limbs, senses and passions, and therefore the God of the bible is a material Being. In the same way they attack the descriptions of heaven recorded in the scriptures, and contend that christians expect to enter a pleasant garden, or a splendid city, or the bosom of Abram, or the region among the stars. All this results from their ignorance or depravity. We must have sensible things to make ideas plain to uneducated minds. And consequently objects of this nature are employed when speaking of future punishment as well as when heaven and the Deity are mentioned. So that this objection amounts to nothing, and would apply with as much force against the belief of a spiritual Father.

12. Perhaps you will affirm, that if I give to gehenna the meaning of future torment, I prefer the Targums to the books of the Old Testament. By no means. Your objection has no application to the case in question. I do not go to the jewish writers and commentators for any religious doctrines or precepts; or for their opinion on any article of christian faith and practice. But to ascertain the meaning of a word is a purely philological question. And the only way in which this can be done in the present instance is by referenee to the Targums and Talmuds. This every critic will tell you. This every man of candor must admit. For we

have few if any jewish writings of the period wanted except those I have consulted. I wish for example to ascertain the exact meaning of the term gehenna in the time of our Savior. The Old Testament cannot give me satisfaction on this question. Why so? Because the most modern writings in this book were composed about four hundred years before Christ. After this period the hebrew language underwent many and great transformations. Now the Targums and Talmuds come very near the days of our Savior. And even the comparatively later jewish writers, who use the word to denote future punishment, as they do in hundreds of instances, are good authority. For you cannot suspect them of borrowing the signification of hebrew words from christian writers. They evidently ground their doctrines on the Targums, the early Rabbins, and the Talmuds; for to all these they constantly refer. The Old Testament in the Septuagint version furnishes no authority one way or the other, for the valley of Hinnom is always rendered in some other form of words. Perhaps you will ask why great use is not made of these jewish writings in illustration of the scriptures? They have indeed been used to great advantage. Look at Lightfoot, Wetstein, Schoettgen and others; the greatest names in biblical criticism, and you will never ask such a question a second time. I have answered every objection which I think can have any influence with reasonable men. I will therefore conclude my present communication with one or two observations.

If you or any of your denomination are not satisfied with my conclusion, I ask you to appoint some well qualified person to make a thorough investigation of the whole subject. All the necessary books are to be found in the Library of Harvard University, which is open to

all settled ministers within ten miles of Cambridge. I have no fear of the result. I feel morally certain that conviction must be produced upon any unprejudiced mind by the evidence there to be found, that our Savior used gehenna to mean future punishment. I had no idea of the mass of arguments for this definition until I gave my attention to the inquiry. I then found that I had neither time nor qualifications to make that thorough research which my work demanded. I accordingly obtained the assistance of two friends, the Rev. George Nichols, and the Rev. Andrew P. Peabody, tutor in Hebrew and Mathematics in the University, who are amply and admirably qualified for the undertaking. They have spent hours and days in poring over the Targums, and Talmuds, and other authorities in various ancient and modern languages. They have furnished me with numerous quotations, translated from the original chaldaic, some of which you have in the present communication. They have provided materials enough for a volume, a small part of which are here presented; but as the case appears to me so perfectly clear, I have thought one letter sufficient for this topic. I am therefore prepared to defend the position I have taken; and, not only so, I can command the services of those who have already laid me under such lasting obligations, as well as of others whose acquirements and candor will render their statements worthy of the highest confidence. Many questions must be settled by a preponderance of evidence on one side. In this instance almost every argument of consequence favors my definition. You can say something against it, and so you can against the existence of matter. But the inquiries of biblical critics on this subject have uniformly led to the same results; and all I ask is that you should induce

some disinterested witness to go to the College Library and make a thorough investigation of this question. Until then I shall consider that I have fairly proved the doctrine of future punishment from that class of passages in which the word gehenna occurs.

LETTER VII.

My Dear Sir,

Your attention is now invited to some of those passages which fairly imply or plainly teach rewards and punishments in another existence. I have arranged them in twelve distinct classes, and will present for your consideration as many of the number as my limits will permit.

I. In the first place, I will notice those passages in which our Savior promises a reward to those who confess him before men, and threatens punishment to those who publicly deny him. These are his words. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." To have Christ acknowledge us as his true disciples before our heavenly Father and his holy angels is surely a reward for our fidelity. To be denounced before the heavenly host as disobedient and depraved must certainly be regarded as a severe punishment. You may how-

ever contend that all this confession and denial are confined to the present life; and this position you must prove in order to establish your belief in no future retribution. Let me show you the absurdity of such a supposition. Here is a man for example who openly denies the Savior, calls him a wicked impostor, ridicules his precious invitations, and knowingly disregards his instructions. You go to him with your interpretation of this text. You make use of the following language. "Friend, you are denying Christ; this you must admit; now permit me to assure you that he is at the same time denying you to be a true disciple before his Father and the holy angels; you may continue in this impenitent state until death if you please; but the first moment you enter upon the next conscious existence you will be admitted to the happiness of heaven, and Jesus will acknowledge you as one of the number for whom he laid down his precious life." Is there an unbeliever on earth who would not laugh you to scorn for such preaching? But perhaps you will say that this promise and this threatening were fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem. Let us then give the true meaning to the sentence and see how it will read. Our Savior was instructing his apostles in relation to their future ministry. To make his teaching consistent with your views he should have made the following address. "Go forth and preach the gospel to every creature; if any of you desert my cause and deny me before the world, you will perish in the destruction of the holy city; there will be an end of all your sufferings; the moment you enter upon the life to come I shall stand ready to receive you and welcome you to the heavenly mansions; those of you who continue faithful to my religion shall be persecuted and tormented; you shall indeed escape the impending calamity, but only to experience every manner of cruelty and tor-

ture, and the most inhuman martyrdom; then you shall be received to an equality with those of your number who avoided all these unparalleled sufferings by timely renouncing my religion, deserting my cause and denying me before the world." Such must have been his speech in order to reconcile your belief with the passage quoted. I think nothing more need be said to convince any candid mind that our Savior distinctly taught the doctrine of future retribution in this class of passages. Whenever this position is denied I stand ready to mention many substantial reasons why this threatening and promise could not have been limited to this world. Matthew 10. 32, 33. Mark 8. 38. Luke 12. 9.

II. In the second place, I will mention those passages in which our Savior promises reward to the forgiving, and threatens punishment to the unforgiving. These are his solemn words. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." I have already shown that forgiveness of any particular sin takes place upon reformation, and the consequence of reformation is spiritual happiness both here and hereafter. Until a sin is voluntarily forsaken, it cannot be forgiven, and consequently must continue its punishment in this world and the next. Now you would limit our Savior's meaning to the present existence. Let us see how your exposition would read. You visit a hardened pirate whose heart is filled with ill will, hatred and revenge. You preach to him from the text quoted in the following manner. "Stranger, your infernal passions make you miserable and wretched. Banish them from your bosom, acquire christian love for your fellow men, and you will receive the forgiveness of your Father and consequent happiness. If you think the work of reform-

ation too difficult on account of your great depravity, just destroy your life in the easiest manner possible, and when you awake in another world, your wickedness will be all removed, your heart will be filled with the kindest affection towards all you have murdered, and you will experience the divine forgiveness. Or if you are too much of a coward to take this short road to holiness, you must remain unforgiven and in unceasing torment until your mortal career shall terminate, and then all will be done for you by miracle which you have so long neglected to do for yourself." Is not this mode of exposing the absurdity of your interpretation of such instructions perfectly fair? So it appears to my mind, and I certainly intend no disrespect to your person or character. I have proved in a former communication that our moral characters cannot change by our passage through death; and consequently I must believe that our Savior meant to teach future retribution in the class of passages in which forgiveness is promised to the forgiving, and pardon is withheld from the unforgiving. Whenever an attempt is made to reconcile such teaching with your belief, I shall feel prepared to state my objections to your interpretations. Mat. 6. 14; 18. 35. Mark 11. 25.

III. In the third place I will consider those passages in which spiritual happiness is promised to the obedient believer, and severe misery threatened upon those who are unbelieving and disobedient. These are the words. "He that believeth on the son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." I have already shown the nature of salvation. You have seen that the real believer in Jesus receives some foretaste of that spiritual happiness which is to be received more fully hereafter. So that to say the truly holy hath already become a partaker of everlasting or spiritual felicity is perfectly

correct. This reward for goodness begins in this world and extends to the next existence. He then who disobeys the Savior does not see life, does not enjoy the happiness which arises from religion. This no one doubts. This is a part of the punishment for his disbelief. And do not the words of the text imply that he shall not see life until he believes; that the wrath of God abides upon him until he becomes a christian? Certainly. Suppose then the author of this sentence had been a believer in your doctrine. He was preaching to those who believed in a future retribution. In order to guard them from error he should have used the following language. "If you believe and obey the true Messiah, you will experience present happiness. If you refuse and reject and disobey the Savior of mankind, you cannot taste of this felicity. The wrath or punishment of God will abide upon you until death. Then you will believe on Jesus, and enter immediately upon celestial glory, and be upon an equality with those of your brethren who were christians on earth. You now resist the most convincing evidence of his divine mission, but then you will have faith and holiness without your own exertion or even consent." Now if there was any intimation in scripture that such a change is to be effected, there might be more appearance of consistency in such harangues. But none such being found, it being manifestly contrary to our experience and reason, for a person to obtain belief and moral goodness without his own efforts, your supposition appears truly absurd. Whenever then you are disposed to show that an impenitent unbeliever can experience the happiness of heaven without his own consent; when you endeavor to prove that the wrath of God abides on the sinner no longer than the present life continues, then I shall aim to show the futility of

your reasoning, and the folly of your position. John 3. 36. Heb. 10. 39.

IV. In the fourth place, I will examine some of the passages in which the disobedient are threatened with punishment, and the obedient promised a reward. Take the following as a specimen. God "will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality; eternal life. But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honor, and peace to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God." The exact meaning of the apostle is expressed in the following paraphrase. "The reward which God will bestow upon those who patiently persevere in a course of virtue will be that everlasting honor and happiness in a future life, the hope of which has been the most powerful spring of action, and the most abundant source of consolation in their struggles through life. But on the other hand, the most insupportable effects of the divine displeasure shall fall upon those who have acted contrary to their better knowledge; who though instructed in the rule of duty have lived in the practice of vice, whatever arrogant pretensions they may have made to be the favorites of heaven, or how loud and severe soever their censures may have been of others, who though not possessing the same privileges, have not exceeded them in the commission of crime. To be plain with you, my brethren, I must frankly tell you, that the Jew who glories in his privileges is equally amenable to the divine tribunal with the despised Gentile. The man who perseveres in sin shall suffer ade-

quate and insupportable punishment, whether Jew or Gentile, and indeed the Jew will be the greater sufferer, because he sins against superior light; and every one who perseveres in the practice of virtue, shall be put into possession of the promised reward, whether Jew or Gentile." I do not see how any one can suppose the apostle meant to confine these promises and threatenings to the present life. What had these converts at Rome to fear from the destruction of Jerusalem? Were Jews and Gentiles then rewarded according to their deeds? In the gospel dispensation are the secrets of all hearts made manifest? Do those who disobey experience any greater misery than the disobedient in jewish or heathen lands? Has eternal life been given to those who continue patient in well doing? What is meant by seeking immortality? Not only so. Does not Paul refer to those who had lived before his day? And what had all these to do with any temporal calamities after their death? It is unnecessary to make further inquiries. I know not how words can more plainly teach the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. Romans 2. 7, 12.

V. In the fifth place, I will place before you a passage in which persecutors are threatened with future punishment, and a rest is promised to the faithful. These are the words of Paul. "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure; which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, for which ye also suffer; seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey

not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe, because our testimony among you was believed in that day." You will obtain the exact meaning of Paul from the following paraphrase. "With much regret we hear that the cruelty of your persecutors does not yet relent. But having been also informed of the fortitude with which you undergo the severest sufferings, and of your faithful adherence to the profession and promises of the gospel, we cannot but congratulate you upon your heroic conduct; and we are continually boasting of you wherever we go, and holding up your example to other christians for their encouragement under similar trials. And be assured, my brethren, that such sufferings as yours, borne with such a temper and in such a cause, cannot fail of their proper recompense. They are themselves a proper proof of a future judgment under the righteous government of God; and are preparing you for a glorious station in that blessed and immortal state, the lively expectation of which supports you under all your sufferings. And I can assure you, my brethren, from the highest authority, that we are not deceived in the conclusions we draw from the persecutions of the virtuous and faithful, that there is a judgment to come. For the righteous God himself regards it as an equitable thing, and as that which the honor of his government requires, to protect the innocent sufferer, and to inflict a just retaliation upon their cruel persecutors. And the gospel revelation teaches us when this awful distinction shall take place. Your oppressors shall be punished; and you, together with us, who like you are exposed to continual persecution for the sake of Christ, shall enter upon your final and ever-

lasting reward, on that day, when Jesus our exalted chief shall appear again in the clouds of heaven." Will you confine these threatenings and promises to this life? What will become of consistency and truth under such an exposition? What had the persecutors at Thessalonica to fear from the destruction of Jerusalem? Were they signally punished before that event occurred? Were they then driven from the presence of Jesus? For you must know that the word Lord in the last part of the passage refers to our Savior. Were the christians delivered from temporal persecutions? There are so many important facts which your explanation contradicts that it is impossible to make it bear upon this inspired declaration. If these persecutors were destroyed then they obtained the promised rest before the faithful and injured disciples. I say nothing concerning the words everlasting destruction, for I am engaged in proving the certainty of future retribution, and not the nature or duration of punishment. And if this paragraph does not teach rewards and punishments beyond the grave then I know nothing of the use of language. 2 Thes. 1. 5, 9.

VI. In the sixth place, I will refer you to those passages which relate to the sin against the holy spirit. These are the words of our Savior. "And whosoever speaketh a word against the son of man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the holy ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world neither in the world to come." The same declaration is thus recorded by Mark. "All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the holy ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." The exposition of this notable passage is attended with no great difficulty. Our heavenly Father who dwelt in Jesus wrought mir-

acles in confirmation of his divine mission. The Jews believed in evil spirits, and attributed these mighty works to the prince of demons. This was their offence, speaking evil of the holy spirit of God. Jesus assures them that all other sins are more easily forgiven than this. That is, they would be more likely to forsake other vices than to overcome this unbelief. If they could resist the evidence of their own senses there was little probability of their embracing the gospel. And in another life they could scarcely have more proof of his messiahship, and consequently were actually in danger of eternal condemnation; for they could never obtain forgiveness and the attendant happiness until they believed and obeyed and became holy. Of course no one is in danger of committing this particular offence at the present period of the world; for none can see miracles wrought, and I presume there are not many who would defend the miraculous powers of evil spirits. Now I do not see how it is possible to reconcile the ideas of our Savior with your belief. Suppose he had really meant what your exposition declares. He would have worded himself in the following manner. "You may speak evil of me and every one else as much and as long as you please, and no punishment shall follow your offence. But if you speak against the holy spirit, you will not be converted to christianity while I live, nor in the age after my ascension, or even after the destruction of Jerusalem. But should any of you die within a few hours your forgiveness is granted; there is an end of your unbelief; you will be made holy and happy when you wake up in the next existence." Can any one believe that the inspired Jesus meant this or any thing of a similar character? I see not how words can more plainly teach future retribution. Matt. 12. 32; Mark 3. 29; Luke 12. 10.

VII. In the seventh place, I will direct your attention to a passage which plainly threatens punishment to the unfaithful minister, and promises a reward to him who adheres to the divine master with fidelity. These are the words which Paul addressed to his son Timothy. "It is a faithful saying; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." The following paraphrase happily expresses the meaning of the apostle. "The profession and especially the preaching of the pure uncorrupted doctrine of Christ, exposes us to many temporary inconveniences and sufferings; but it does not leave us without an adequate recompense. It is indeed, my friend, a most certain, a most solemn, and a most glorious truth, that whatever sacrifices we may be called to make in the cause of truth and virtue, nay, if we even suffer death itself for the sake of Christ and his gospel, we shall be acting a safe, a wise, and an honorable part. He died for us, and rose again; if we die with him and for him, we, like him shall rise to a glorious and immortal life. If we suffer persecution for his sake, we shall hereafter share with him in his throne, and participate in his everlasting triumph. To these animating considerations there is also an alarming counterpart, which may justly awaken our utmost solicitude. If we who make a profession of christianity, and who are placed in eminent stations in the church, who know the truth and the infinite importance of the doctrine we are commissioned to teach, if we, I say, from indolence or timidity, or from any other unworthy motive, should be induced to desert our post, and abandon our profession, our case is wretched beyond expression. He has himself declared that he will another day disown those who

now disown and forsake him; and in vain may we flatter ourselves that we shall escape his just animadversion. We may violate our engagements, but he will never swerve from his declarations, either of reward or punishment. He will never contradict himself. And his veracity, his wisdom, and even his benevolence are pledged to the performance of his threatenings, equally with the accomplishment of his promises." I should not suppose any one would even attempt to reconcile a passage which so clearly teaches future retribution with your system. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12, 13.

VIII. In the eighth place, I will notice that class of passages which use the word perish for future punishment, and saved for future happiness. Take the following as a sample of the whole. "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life." The word perish is used for some kind of misery; I am not concerned to show its nature; it is the consequence or punishment of rejecting the gospel. To be saved is to be made good, and thus prepared both for present and future happiness. That the punishment in this passage extends beyond this life I have no doubt. The whole sentence may be illustrated by the following paraphrase. "Our labors as ministers of Christ are attended with various success. Some of our hearers receive our doctrine, and gladly accept the blessings and privileges of the gospel; others despise and reject our important message, and choose rather to remain and perish in ignorance, idolatry and vice, than to embrace the glad tidings of salvation; but whatever be the effect of our doctrine upon our hearers, our fidelity and zeal in all cases are equally exerted, and equally acceptable to God, in whose estimation they are as the fragrant incense of a

costly sacrifice. To some, the doctrine of the gospel is a fatal venom; it excites contempt and hatred, malice and rage; they oppose it to the utmost; their guilt and misery are aggravated; and their ruin is sealed; so that the gospel, which should have been their salvation becomes their bane. Upon others the effect is widely different. The doctrine of the gospel, approved by the understanding and cherished in the heart, becomes a reviving, invigorating, exhilarating principle, which dispels their darkness, which soothes their sorrows, which prepares them for, and will in due time advance them to a happy and immortal state of being." Now suppose Paul had believed your doctrine, how different must have been his declarations. He would have said something like the following. "Our preaching produces different effects upon our hearers. Some believe and obey the gospel; they are made wiser and better and happier; at the same time they expose themselves to serious inconveniences, and severe trials, and cruel persecutions. Some of them remain unconverted; they live in their wretched heathen condition; they lose all the pleasures of religion; they indeed escape all the revilings, and indignities, and sufferings, and cruelties to which their believing brethren are exposed. When they die however all will be on an equality; and as the longest life is but short, no great can be gained by embracing the gospel." This however does not sound like any of the apostolic instructions which I have read. And I must conclude that the apostle to the gentiles taught future rewards and punishments. 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16.

IX. In the ninth place, I will notice some of the parables in which our Savior plainly taught the doctrine of future retribution. As a specimen of the whole of this description, take the one which relates to the rich man and Lazarus. These are the words of our

Savior. "There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died and was buried; and in *hades* he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulph fixed; so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. And he said, nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Such is the parable as recorded by Luke 16. 19—31.

Now one simple question naturally arises. Did our Savior mean to confirm the belief of his hearers in rewards and punishments after death? You believe he had no such design. I think he intended to teach the

doctrine of future retribution. I will now endeavor to prove the correctness of my opinion. Before I proceed to my direct evidence I will mention four rules which all sound critics apply to the interpretation of our Savior's parables.

In the first place, you will remember that every parable is designed to inculcate some one essential truth, or to impress upon the minds of the hearers some one important duty. You will readily recall to mind several illustrations of this observation. The parable of the good Samaritan was designed to inculcate universal benevolence. The parable of the prodigal son was intended to teach the paternal character of our Father in heaven. The parable of the marriage feast was related to impress the importance of personal holiness. The parable of the ten virgins shows the necessity of watchfulness.

In the second place, you will remember that the attendant circumstances in a parable do not all admit of an allegorical exposition. Many of them are introduced by way of imagery. They render the story more interesting and striking. Illustrations of these remarks may be drawn from almost any of the number. The prodigal son eating husks, the dogs licking the sores, the pouring of oil and wine upon the wounds of the half-murdered traveller, may be mentioned as examples.

In the third place, you must determine the lesson of each parable mainly by what precedes and what follows, or by the particular occasion which gave rise to the narration. By turning to almost any of the number you will see the truth of this assertion verified. Why did he relate the parable of the pharisee and publican? Because there were certain present who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others.

Why did he mention the story of the good Samaritan? Because one asked who was his neighbor.

In the fourth place, you must not seek a meaning to any parable which could not possibly have suggested itself to the minds of the hearers. For in such a case the story could have been neither pertinent, interesting, nor profitable; it would neither have enlightened his countrymen as to duty, nor given his disciples any new views of the religion of which they were to be trustees; consequently such instruction must have been unworthy an inspired teacher.

Now the exposition which some of your writers have given of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus openly violates these fundamental principles of interpretation, and consequently cannot stand the test of sound criticism. I will examine the one which your oldest and ablest divine has published. I will suppose for the sake of avoiding names, and making my remarks more direct, that you have adopted this explanation as your own, to all intents and purposes. Now you draw from this relation not a single lesson of doctrine or duty. On the contrary you find in it a full account of the gospel economy, of the whole christian system, as you think it should exist. In order to make consistency you are obliged to give the most forced interpretations possible to every circumstance, and to magnify the most trivial incidents into matters of high and deep import. You call the rich man the high priest under the law. But these priests were never wealthy; in fact poverty was entailed upon the whole fraternity. You give an allegorical interpretation to the man's property. You say that "his riches consisted in the righteousness of the law." You make the beggar represent the gentiles. The beggar in the parable however desired to be fed

with crumbs from the rich man's table. And what do you make of the high priest's table to which the gentiles looked with such earnest longings? "The tables of stone on which the oracles of God were written." A little knowledge of the greek language would have shown you that a table to eat on and the one written upon were never called by the same name. And what are the crumbs from these tables? Instructions. Now is this supposed fact verified by any historical evidence? Were any portion of the gentiles ever peculiarly anxious to derive instructions from the two tables of stone? Suppose they were, according to your own statement they never received the desired information. Though the Jews compassed sea and land to make a single proselyte, yet the person you call the high priest is unwilling to bestow his instructions on these longing gentiles. The dogs however were more merciful, for they came and licked the sores. And who were these dogs! No less personages than Socrates, Plato and all such characters; the ancient heathen philosophers who endeavored to cure the moral infirmities of their disciples. But notwithstanding the care of these kind dogs, the gentiles die. Die to what? To idolatry, and after death they are carried by angels, that is, by the apostles, to Abraham's bosom, that is, to his faith. Would it not be a better figure to represent the apostles as angels of death, since they were the agents in making the heathen die to idolatry? But you employ these same angelic apostles on a most eccentric mission. You send them to convert the gentiles to Abraham's faith which most believers suppose the gospel was designed to supersede. And what do you understand by the death of the rich man? The close of the dispensation of which the high priest was minister. And what by his burial? "His being closed up in the earthly character and nature."

This is a little beyond my depth, but no matter. Lifting up his eyes in hell represents the high priest feeling a conviction of the condemning power of the law. Is this according to history? And also the ragings of the fire represented by that on mount Sinai and by the flaming appearance of the first stone on his breastplate. Seeing Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom, indicates the fulfilment of these words of our Savior, "Ye shall see them come from the east and from the west, the north and the south." Lazarus being willing to go to the rich man, implies a missionary spirit in the converted gentiles with regard to the Jews, and the great gulph an indisposition on the part of the Almighty to have that spirit gratified. Moses was this high priest's father, the dispensation of the law his father's house, and the five brethren that part of the house of Israel represented by the five foolish virgins. Which part this was we are not informed. Sending one risen from the dead means "one possessed of a knowledge of the gospel, being dead as before described."

Now I suppose every sound critic will pronounce this exposition a miserable tissue of nonsense and absurdity and ignorance. For my own part I refrain from all remarks, for I dare not trust myself to give utterance to my honest opinions respecting many of the writings of your sect which I have been obliged to peruse in preparing for this discussion. I would merely ask, if this explanation looks any thing like the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus? Is not unity of design the prominent characteristic in the parables of our Savior? Must not this one be necessarily an exception? Remove a single component part of your structure and the whole fabric falls to the ground. Not only so. If you have given the true exposition, this parable was altogether impertinent to the occasion. Nothing had

previously been said concerning the high priest or the gentiles or Abraham; nothing that would lead to such a meaning as you suppose. But this is not the worst of the case. It is very manifest that those who heard the story could have had no conception of its true import. We are very certain the inspired apostles never penetrated so deeply into its design. Nay, it is in the highest degree probable that none but the author of this exposition ever ascertained the whole meaning of the anointed Jesus. And if his book containing this specimen of originality should now be lost, there is not one chance in ten thousand that any other person would again discover so much hidden wisdom in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

I will now present you with my exposition of the parable. You may determine its intent and import in some degree from the context. After relating the parable of the unjust steward, our Savior warns his disciples in the hearing of many others, against an undue attachment to worldly possessions, which he represents under the figure of Mammon, a Syrian divinity, answering to the classical Plutus, the god of riches. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." When the *covetous* pharisees heard all these things they *derided* him. Here then you have the occasion on which the following parable was related, and of course you will look for something pertinent to the occasion. The sacred historian would not have mentioned the *derision* of the *covetous* pharisees, unless to have introduced the discourse to which their derision gave rise. Their scornful looks, words or actions, it appears broke off his discourse to his disciples, and he turns immediately to them with these words: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts." He then assures them in the following verses

of the perpetuity of the moral obligations of the law, implies that it was not his office to relax or abrogate it, but to render its requisitions the more strict. He then proceeds to rebuke more particularly that sin which had always been the most prominent in his reproaches of the pharisees, a supreme love of wealth, which they had sought by extortion from the widow, the orphan and the fatherless.

Now to discern the point of the parable you must remember the fundamental error of the pharisees on this subject. When Jesus said, ye cannot serve God and mammon, it was a hard saying to them. For they had attempted to serve both; they had thought their service acceptable in the sight of heaven; they had imagined that while their hearts were bound up in this world's goods, they were still faithful in their duty to God, were objects of his special favor, and the heirs of his kingdom. And this sin is the very point at which our Savior aims in this parable. His grand design is to teach that riches do not commend a man to the favor of our father, or confer permanent felicity; but that covetousness must be punished hereafter. In order to do this he represents an affluent man, surrounded by every object of desire, seeking happiness in splendid attire and sumptuous living. He neglects his social duties, is selfish and unfeeling. A beggar is laid at his gate, poor, diseased and miserable. He lays there from day to day unheeded. He finds more sympathy from the dogs than from his rich fellow man. At length he dies and is buried. He is carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. This phrase was common among the Jews, and its meaning may be illustrated by the following quotation from the Babylonish Talmud. "Holy men did all they could to detain Rabbi Judah here, but angels carried him to heaven. Now he sits in Abraham's

bosom." The rich man also died and was buried. He is afterwards represented as being in *hades*. What is the meaning of this word? You know that in classical greek it denotes the subterranean receptacle, whither all the dead who had been regularly buried passed, into a state of either happiness or misery. Elyssium the abode of the beatified spirits, and Tartarus the place of punishment, were both considered compartments of hades. The translators of the Septuagint render the hebrew word *sheol* by this term hades. The word sheol does not mean simply the grave in the Old Testament, for you find instances in which the inhabitants are represented as alive and conversing. In these places it is considered as a scene of life after death. I suppose that no one acquainted with the subject will deny that hades frequently means a state of conscious existence into which men pass after death. The Jews, as appears from their own writers, regarded hades as a vast subterranean receptacle for souls, which contained in its upper part, paradise; and in its lower gehenna. In this hades the rich man goes. He is in torment. And here is introduced a circumstance, tending forcibly in unison with the main design of the parable, to show the worthlessness of riches. He is represented as calling to the poor beggar for assistance. His riches avail him nothing, and he would rejoice to change places with Lazarus. But this is not permitted. And here Abraham is introduced to apply the moral of the parable, and the amount of his preaching is simply this. When alive you possessed what you considered the greatest good, which from its very nature you could not bring with you into the next existence. Lazarus indeed suffered severely while on earth, but his sufferings were of such a nature that death terminated them. Now you are necessarily miserable, because you have lost the wealth in which

you trusted. He is happy because he has escaped from those bodily sufferings which belong to earth. The rich man is then made to express a tender concern for his brothers who were following his example; and he wishes to have Lazarus sent to warn them of their folly and wickedness. He is answered, that if they will not keep the moral law of the Old Testament, it would hardly profit them to hear a messenger from the dead. How simple, how clear, how beautiful the instruction of our Savior.

I could state many reasons why this exposition gives the true intent and meaning of the parable. But the case is really so plain that I am ashamed to use words in such a cause. To suppose that our Savior figured forth the jewish and christian dispensations in this parable is to substitute imagination for truth, and theory for fact. I must therefore believe our divine master meant to teach a retribution after death for the character here formed. And I believe this, first, because the phrase, Abraham's bosom, is used; second, because the word hades is used; third, because the words die and bury are used; fourth, because the rich man is represented as having lost his riches; fifth, because the phrase *in thy life time* is used; sixth, because the rich man is separated from his five brethren, who must have been in the same situation as himself, if the rich man meant the high priest or jewish nation; seventh, because my exposition naturally arises from the connexion and is pertinent to the occasion. Many more particulars might be mentioned, but these are sufficient for my present purpose. Until this explanation can be fairly disproved I must regard this parable as designed to inculcate the doctrine of future rewards and punishments.

Thus have I given what appears to me to be the true meaning of our Savior. Can any candid mind arrive at

a different conclusion from an examination of the scriptures themselves? I know of no serious objections which can be presented to this exposition. You may indeed say that it is a parable, and that we ought not to derive any doctrine from a fictitious narration. So you might affirm that the prodigal son and the good Samaritan are parables, and consequently we ought not to appeal to them in proof of the paternal character of God, or the duty of universal benevolence. All this avails nothing. Many of our Savior's most important lessons were conveyed in fictitious narrations. You may also say that *hades* is used and not gehenna. It is not my business to show that future punishment will be received in any particular place. If we have evidence that men are happy or miserable after death on account of their conduct in this world, the question is settled. I could indeed enter into this controversy about words, and probably make as great a display of learning as some other men, but I do not deem this in the least essential to my position. You may likewise contend that nothing is said concerning the moral character of either of the parties. In this I think you are greatly mistaken. Does not our Savior aim directly to show the want of hospitality and christian love in the rich man? Words cannot be more decisive. And is not the supposition perfectly natural that the beggar was righteous? To be sure all the particulars in either case are not mentioned, but enough is said to show us distinctly that riches can confer no permanent felicity, that benevolence is a christian duty; that selfishness, covetousness and hardheartedness must lead to more or less future misery. Other parables which plainly imply a future retribution must be omitted. See Mat. 13. 24; 18. 23; 22. 2. Luke 14. 16; 16. 1—19; 19. 11

X. In the tenth place, I will notice those passages

which teach future rewards and punishments after the resurrection. It is first necessary to show that the righteous and wicked will survive the dissolution of the body, or be raised to an immortal and incorruptible existence. This is clearly and indisputably proved by the following sentence from Paul: "There shall be a resurrection, both of the just and the unjust." Here then you learn the most important fact, that all of whatever character shall live again after their temporal death. Will raising the unjust make them just and happy? In reply to this question I give you the clear and decisive answer of our Savior. These are his solemn words. "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." One would suppose this passage, so plain, so striking, so conclusive, must settle the controversy concerning future retribution forever. But some of your writers have attempted to explain away its obvious meaning and substitute a figurative one. Here then we enter upon disputed ground. Let me state the opinions which I reject and the one I receive. Acts 24. 15. John 5. 28, 29.

I. You contend that our Savior meant a *moral* resurrection. I will give the exposition of two of your prominent divines in their own words. Take the following from your oldest preacher. "The true meaning of the words of Jesus appears to be, that those Jews who listened to the mild precepts of the gospel, proclaimed by Christ and his apostles, came forth from spiritual death to the life of faith in the new covenant; but those Jews who rejected the doctrine of salvation, crucified the Savior, and persecuted his apostles, were those who had done evil, and they were roused from

the dormant state in which they lay, as in a covenant of death and in a refuge of lies, by the voice of judgment, and came forth to the resurrection of that damnation, which is so particularly pointed out in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew." Take the following statement from your next oldest minister. "It is evident that the time of the resurrection of the dead, is not meant, but the hour or time of the destruction of Jerusalem. The jewish nation whom our Lord addressed, had long been in a state of moral and political death. They were not only dead, but buried in their lusts, or in the language of the prophet, were *in the graves*. A few of them under our Lord's ministry had heard his voice, and were raised to moral or spiritual life, during the time expressed in the phrase, "now is," verse 25. But he says in the 28th, "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." Come forth from what? They shall come forth from the state of inactivity to action, from this moral and political death. But this coming forth shall be very different in some from others; for, 1st. They that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life. To enter into life and into the kingdom of God mean the same thing, and both these refer to entering into our Lord's kingdom in this world, which at the end of the jewish dispensation was to come with power. 2d. And they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. This must be the damnation of punishment inflicted on men at the end of the jewish dispensation, and especially on that nation who were so highly favored with our Lord's ministry. They came forth to the resurrection of damnation or punishment at this period." Now the simple comparison of these expositions with the passage itself is enough to prove their incorrectness. I will however briefly state

a few reasons for rejecting these explanations. Ballou's Lectures, p. 377. Universalist Magazine, Vol. 7, p. 103, 107.

1. In the first place, what is a *moral* resurrection? Is it not a resurrection from sin to holiness? Is it not a resurrection from doing evil to doing good? Surely. Now you notice that *all* who are in the graves are to be raised. On your theory *all the Jews* were soon to experience a moral resurrection. But the Savior speaks of those who had done good. If they had done good they were already holy. They needed no moral resurrection. For it is not they who are *going* to do good, but those who *have* already done good, who have already experienced the moral resurrection, who are to come forth to happiness. Now if you can show how the benighted Jews did good while in the graves of sin, ignorance and darkness, then I shall be prepared to learn how they could be made holy a second time; and how their holiness was to save them from temporal calamities, when our Savior prophesied the most severe persecutions to his disciples. Then *all* who had done evil are also to be raised? Is their's a *moral* resurrection? If so, why are they condemned after experiencing the moral resurrection? How could they suffer any more punishment after embracing the gospel than those who had done good before the moral resurrection? When you can reconcile all these contradictions I shall be prepared to listen to your argument — until then I must believe your exposition in the very first instance makes our Savior utter nonsense and falsehood.

2. In the second place, the greek word translated *graves* occurs frequently in the christian scriptures. It is used to mean real tombs, sepulchres, graves, in every instance. It is never used figuratively, to mean the darkness and ignorance of heathenism or judaism or

sinfulness. As no one will deny the truth of these assertions, I need not produce quotations in their support. Now is it not most unreasonable to give a new and unheard-of meaning to a greek word for the express purpose of contradicting the obvious meaning of our Savior?

3. In the third place, the greek word translated resurrection occurs several times in the christian scriptures. When the resurrection of Jesus is spoken of, this word is used in every instance except one. In every case in which our Savior employed the word, it means the resurrection of the dead, or the life beyond the grave. Take the several examples, and determine for yourself. "The sadducees which say there is no resurrection." You know the subject of dispute between the pharisees and sadducees was the literal resurrection of the dead. "At the resurrection whose wife shall she be?" This certainly refers to the period after the death of the woman and seven husbands. "As touching the resurrection of the dead." Surely the literal dead. "I am the resurrection and the life." The author or agent of the resurrection of the dead, as the connexion manifestly proves. "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." No one would think of doubting that this referred to a literal resurrection of the dead if he had not a system to support which this meaning plainly contradicts. I have already given an exposition of this passage. There is no need of my quoting the parallel texts from the other evangelists. Now these passages show, first, that Christ uniformly used *anastasis* to denote a resurrection of the literally dead; and secondly, that he so used it without the words which mean the dead being conjoined. Consequently this uniform usage of *anastasis* which I might also trace through the epistles, is a strong reason for assigning it

the same sense in this passage. Is it not most unreasonable then to give this word a figurative meaning in this particular instance so as to destroy the whole force of our Savior's declaration? Mat. 22. 23, 28, 31. Mark 12. 18, 23. Luke 14. 14; 20. 27, 35, 36. John 12. 24, 25.

4. In the fourth place, your exposition contradicts facts. You say that our Savior meant the Jews. Did he not use the word *all*? Do you say *all* means a *part*? If it does in this case why may it not have the same meaning when the apostle declares that God will have *all* men to be saved? Be careful not to involve yourself in the same condemnation you have so long heaped upon your orthodox brethren. Now were *all* Jews brought to a knowledge of Jesus in any sense; or did they experience any kind of a moral resurrection? This you will not pretend. Then you say that those who had done good while in the graves of darkness and ignorance would be rewarded; that is, they would be the first to embrace the Savior and be saved from the temporal calamities coming upon their nation. Now our Savior says that he came to call sinners and not the righteous to repentance; that publicans and harlots would enter his school sooner than the pharisees. Not the most moral then were received into this kingdom first. You also believe that the christians were saved from the destruction of Jerusalem by fleeing to Pella. This statement rests on the single assertion of one ecclesiastical historian who lived more than three hundred years after the crucifixion. If this is sufficient evidence to establish this fact, then let it rest. But if the Jews who were destroyed were saved from all further misery, and the christians were persecuted in the most cruel manner, I see not how those that had done good come forth to the resurrection of happiness, or those

who had done evil to the resurrection of condemnation. In short your exposition of the passage is contradicted by all historical facts, and consequently cannot be true.

5. In the fifth place, your exposition makes the words of our Savior altogether impertinent to the occasion. You see for yourself that his discourse was introduced by the miracle at the pool of Bethesda, and relates to his miraculous powers and their origin. Consequently to make him talk about the destruction of Jerusalem in this connexion would be absurd.

6. In the sixth place, your interpretation makes nonsense and falsehood of the whole passage. If *anastasis* means a *moral* resurrection, *mnemeiois* must mean a *moral* grave; a most harsh and unnatural figure. The Jews are all to come forth from what? From these moral graves. But did all come forth? Did all come at one time? Those who have done good issued when they became holy; and those who have done evil yet remain in them. You see that the explanation will not hang together. Those who had done good come forth to a life of persecution; and those who had done evil to a death of happiness. No more need be said to manifest the absurdity of your exposition.

7. In the seventh place, if the passage means what you pretend, it could not have been understood by the hearers, and consequently must have been altogether useless. And what is the use of having it recorded for those to whom it has no reference?

8. In the eighth place, some contend that John did not write his gospel until after the destruction of Jerusalem. They say that the threatening in the twenty-fifth of Matthew related to that event, and because this prediction had been fulfilled, it was not recorded by the beloved disciple. Now if this passage related to the same event, would he have retained the one and re-

jected the other? Does not this fact destroy all probability in favor of your explanation?

9. In the ninth place, you support your exposition by the greek phrase *erchetai ora*, which is rendered *the hour is coming*. You contend that the true meaning of the greek words is this, *the hour is at hand*. To this argument I answer, first, that the time in the twenty-fifth verse is designated by the very same greek words, consequently they must refer to a more distant period in the twenty-eighth; and second, there is at least one passage in the New Testament in which the same greek verb is used in the present tense, to denote a future life. Mat. 10. 30.

II. I could mention many more reasons for rejecting your exposition; but sufficient have been stated for present purposes. I will now proceed to give you the true meaning to the passage. I believe our Savior meant to teach the future existence of all mankind, and the certainty of a righteous retribution in the next conscious existence. Let us see if the connexion warrants this belief. Go back to the beginning of the chapter. Jesus cures an infirm man on the sabbath. His carrying his bed excites the attention of the Jews. They find out that his cure was effected by Jesus. They seek to kill him for this benevolent deed. He observes, my Father does not suspend his benevolent operations on the sabbath, and why should I? The Jews were the more indignant, because he professed his affinity to God, and put himself on the same footing with Deity. Jesus answers them in a connected discourse, the connexion and sense of which I will give in a paraphrase.

You complain of my assuming an equality with God. Does not an obedient and dutiful son imitate his father in all things? In like manner I imitate my heavenly Father. He loves me, and makes me the partner of

his councils, shows me all his own works, and empowers me to perform similar operations upon earth, and he *will* empower me to do greater works than any I have yet performed, to excite your admiration of my power and your attention to my instructions. It is my Father's prerogative to raise the dead. He has delegated to me the power of doing the same work as I please. He has also appointed me the judge of mankind, so that all men may honor me as bearing his image, and clothed in his authority. As my powers are delegated to me by my Father, and my works performed in imitation of him, he that does not pay deference to my claims, and honor me in my official capacity, fails in his allegiance to God. But he who allows my claims, and receives and complies with the message which God sends through me, will be eternally happy, is free from condemnation, has passed from death unto life. The time is coming when I shall attest the divinity of my claims by greater miracles than you have yet seen. The dead will hear my voice, and will rise from the bed, Jairius' daughter, from the bier, the young man at Nain, from the grave, Lazarus, at my bidding. As my Father has within him a fountain of life, a vivifying power, he has entrusted to me similar power; and in virtue of my messiahship, he has delegated to me a power compared with which the mere power of raising a few persons from death is insignificant. He has appointed me the judge of mankind, and in the exercise of that office, the time will come, when I shall call forth all the dead, the good to happiness and the wicked to condemnation. To be sure I have no inherent aptness for the office of a judge. I judge according to the laws of my Father's appointment, and therefore the retribution which I shall administer will be a righteous one, because it will be in accordance to my Father's will. Now I shall not offer

one word to prove that this is the true exposition. It must strike every one as perfectly natural and indisputably true.

XI. In the last place, I will briefly notice that striking and conclusive class of passages which teach a future judgment. Several greek words are used to denote this process, but *krino* is the root of the whole. Its primitive meaning, as determined by classical greek, is to *separate*, to make a *distinction*. In this sense it occurs in Homer. Hence as every judgment implies a discretionary act, the making of a distinction, the word came to signify *judge*, which is its usual meaning in classical greek and the septuagint. And as the same persons exercised supreme executive power and administered justice, from this union of offices came the sense to *rule*, which we find seldom or never in classical greek, seldom in the septuagint, and in not more than three *undoubted* instances in the christian scriptures. On the contrary it means *judge* in very many places not connected with the question of retribution. Now a judgment implies an examination, a sentence of acquittal or condemnation, an execution, or else it is null and void. Consequently these texts most manifestly teach future rewards and punishments. For why should we be judged unless to be acquitted or condemned?

1. Will the threatened judgment take place after death? Let this question receive a satisfactory answer from the sacred writer. These are the solemn words. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Can language be more decisive? One would suppose that so plain a declaration must satisfy every candid mind. But as it directly contradicts your system it is to be supposed that every possible effort would be made to destroy its force. No success however has attended the labors of your critics on this text.

Three expositions have been given, differing diametrically from each other, and each one so far-fetched and so manifestly absurd that I cannot bring myself to give them even a passing examination. To say that judgment in this verse means returning to dust is truly ridiculous; for what shadow of evidence is there for such an exposition? What difference does it make to us what becomes of our body? What punishment or reward is there in this process? Judgment implies a reward as well as punishment. To make the text refer to the high priest, is still more contemptible if possible. I might show the incongruity of such explanations by substituting the new meanings; but in this particular case I refrain from the work, since neither of these definitions has secured the belief of any individuals with whom I am acquainted. I must consider this passage as conclusive evidence that men will be righteously judged beyond the grave, and consequently rewarded or punished according to the deeds done in the body. Heb. 9. 27.

2. Listen to another most conclusive passage. "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead." Surely if he is to judge the dead as well as the living there can be no question that the judgment takes place beyond the grave. But you contend that dead means those who are dead in trespasses and sins, and that Jesus was to judge these with the converted at the destruction of Jerusalem. Now make an application of your exposition. Peter was delivering the first christian sermon to a gentile family. He should have made the following address in order to make his hearers understand his instruction. "My heathen brethren, I am an apostle of Jesus Christ. He commanded me to preach to the people. I am bound

to declare that God has commissioned him to judge the living and the dead. You may not understand my meaning. I will explain. In about forty years the Romans will take Jerusalem. Many Jews will perish; many will be scattered abroad. Those who have embraced christianity will escape these temporal calamities. They will live to be persecuted, some for a longer and some for a shorter period. By the dead then I mean those Jews who will not listen to the gospel. By the living I mean the christians who are saved from the destruction. When therefore I use the word dead, I mean only the few unbelieving Jews, and not the whole heathen world; for they neither know nor care any thing about Jesus. And when also I use the word living, I mean only the few believers who are to be oppressed by human persecutors and enemies. All those who perish in this awful calamity are forever delivered from future misery, and will be made holy in passing from this world to heaven. All those who adhere to the true religion will be admitted to the same mansions in our Father's house when they shall have experienced more or less earthly wretchedness. You thus see that this Jesus is a mere figurative judge, that he is not seen by any who are judged, that he is not known by many, and that no one of the whole considers either a reward or punishment as coming from him. He will rule you in a similar manner. If you obey his precepts you will have more or less happiness, and if you disobey, more or less misery." Now if you can reconcile this with the other parts of the discourse I am willing. I think this simple and fair paraphrase on your principles sufficient to show the absurdity of your exposition. I must therefore regard this passage as teaching future rewards and punishments. Acts 10. 42.

3. Hear this solemn charge of Paul to Timothy. "I

charge thee therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." This is equally plain and decisive. The same remarks which I made above will more fully expose the absurdity of your exposition of this passage. I will therefore give you the apostle's meaning in the following paraphrase. "I solemnly adjure you, O Timothy, in the name and presence of that great God who searches the hearts, who communicates to all their several talents and qualifications for usefulness, and who strictly observes how these talents are employed; I adjure you further, in the name and as in the presence of our revered master Jesus Christ, who is appointed to the high and glorious office of judging the living and the dead, at whose tribunal we must hereafter appear, who will make inquisition into our conduct and reward us according to our works; yes, my friend, I solemnly adjure you by the solemnities of that awful day, to which as the disciples of Jesus we look forward with anxious expectation, when Jesus shall appear again in pomp and majesty, to raise the dead and to judge the world; and by the glories of that celestial empire which will then commence, and in the honors and triumphs of which we hope, and, if faithful to our profession, shall certainly bear a conspicuous part; upon all these weighty and important considerations I adjure and charge you, as a christian evangelist, proclaim the gospel upon all occasions and in every place with energy and courage." Taking this view of the sentence every thing appears rational, natural, consistent, striking and instructive. But upon your supposition, the apostle has no meaning, but talks nonsense and foolishness. By what rule do you make the general terms, living and dead, mean the few Jews and christians who should be particularly interested in the destruction of Jerusalem? What pertinency had an

allusion to the approaching calamity in this letter to Timothy? I cannot command patience even to ask questions where the case is so plain. I regard this passage as conclusive evidence of a future retribution. 2 Tim. 4. 1.

4. Read the following declaration. "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." This is likewise clear and decisive. Your writers however give it the same meaning as the others, and refer the judgment to the temporal calamities coming on the jewish nation. You say the greek word, *oikoumene*, rendered world, means the Roman empire, including Judea, in five instances in the christian scriptures. The simple classical meaning of this word is the world. In more than half of the instances in which it occurs in the New Testament, it manifestly includes Judea. In no case does it mean the gentile world exclusively. It sometimes means the Roman empire, and sometimes the world taken in its amplest signification, and sometimes it is used in that lower application in which we often use colloquially the phrase *all the world*. So that to confine it in this instance to a particular part of the world is to assert rather than prove the position. But even on this ground, what sense can be made of the apostle's discourse. Did Jesus judge the Roman empire within fifty years of the delivery of this message? You also assert that the greek word, *mello*, means *about to be*, or near at hand. But the same word is used in the seventh chapter after this in connexion with the resurrection of the dead, and no one supposes the judgment of Christ will take place before that period. Jesus speaks of his being appointed judge, and the manner in which he will execute his office. Read my paraphrase under the last head. Let him be the com-

mentator on this text. God gave assurance that all Christ said about himself in this capacity was true by raising him from the dead. If this is not satisfactory, just apply your exposition to the passage itself. Acts 17. 31. John 12. 48.

5. Examine the following declaration. "For as many as have sinned not being under a law shall without a law perish; and as many as have sinned under a law shall by law be judged, in that day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel." Two ideas are distinctly stated by the apostle. First, he refers to men who had lived before; and second, he affirms that they were to be judged hereafter. This passage so manifestly teaches a judgment after death that not one word need be said in defence of this meaning. And to spend words to expose your exposition would be labor lost. The meaning of the whole may be learnt from the following paraphrase. "A righteous God will make a just discrimination in the punishment of guilt; nor will he visit the sins of those who possessed imperfect degrees of moral information with the same severity with which he will punish those who offend against the clear light of divine revelation. Some sin against the obscure intimations of unassisted reason only, being destitute of the superior information communicated by a written law; their offences shall be punished in the way reason may dictate. Others offend against a written and positive law, which prohibits the crime and declares the penalty; by that law shall they be tried, and to its condemning sentence shall they be doomed. There is a day coming when the secrets of the heart shall be brought to light, and every man's character shall be made manifest. In that day God will allot the condition of all mankind in exact correspondence to the truth of their character;

and the gospel, which it is my honorable commission to publish to the world, announces that the medium through which this grand event is to take place is the Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 2. 12, 16.

6. Hear the account of Paul's discourse before a distinguished character. "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." You say that the preacher threatened this hearer with some temporal affliction. Did he possess the gift of prophecy in this instance? Or did he *guess* that his iniquities would bring down upon his head some awful calamity. Suppose we put the verse into plain english, so as to give the force of your exposition. "Felix, you have been unrighteous and intemperate. Your sins have rendered you miserable. You have been so very wicked God will bring further torment upon you very shortly, I imagine. But death will soon terminate all your punishment. You will arise from the dead a reformed character." If any one thinks such ideas calculated to make a sinner tremble, I know of no arguments which can change his opinion. I consider the class of passages now quoted perfectly conclusive. There are several other clear and striking texts of the same character; but I have not room for their insertion or exposition. I may simply refer you to the following places. John 12. 48; 11. 24; 5. 21, 22, 29. 1 Peter 4. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 10.

I have not room for any more passages of scripture in this connexion. That all which I have quoted in the present and two preceding communications either teach or imply the doctrine of future retribution I have no doubt. Were this my individual opinion merely I should feel extremely diffident in giving it expression. But I am supported in my conclusions respecting them by the ablest and best commentators of all denomina-

tions. Not only so. After I had gone through the christian scriptures, and selected all the passages which appeared to me to have a bearing on the present controversy, and arranged them in their respective classes, I requested the late Professor of Biblical Literature in the Divinity School in Cambridge to hear me read my manuscript. He kindly consented, and no text has been presented which he does not consider either as clearly implying or plainly teaching future rewards and punishments. I take pleasure in mentioning this fact, because proper judges consider this gentleman the most thorough and able and candid biblical critic in our country. He has spent years in the study of the New Testament; his judgment is not liable to be warped by personal or party considerations; and those who are acquainted with his deep research, his minute accuracy and his fearless examination, place almost unlimited confidence in his decision. I would also acknowledge my obligations for some of the contents of my present letter to my friend, the Tutor in Hebrew and Mathematics in Harvard University. I shall not therefore feel the force of any sneers which individuals of your sect may possibly express in relation to my expositions of scripture. I have likewise given paraphrases of many texts from the epistles. Every one of the number has been taken from the writings of a divine whom the author of the Modern History of Universalism declares to have been "ardent in the defence of universalism." You perceive therefore that men of candor and learning whom you claim, furnish me with the true meaning of many texts which clearly prove my position. Now let me beseech you to read over every passage in its original connexion. If but one of the whole number teaches future rewards, and but one of the whole number teaches future punishments, my

cause is gained. Can you affirm, in the sincerity of your soul, that no one of the texts quoted were designed to inculcate the doctrine of future retribution? I put the question not only to your conscience but to the consciences of every honest and intelligent believer in christianity.

LETTER VIII.

My Dear Sir,

Your attention is now invited to some incidental arguments in proof of a future retribution. By incidental arguments I mean those which naturally arise from the history of our religion. I mean those indisputable facts which were never designed as evidence in this controversy, but which settle the question beyond all dispute. To my mind they are clear and conclusive, and of themselves sufficient to establish the truth of my position. I could extend the number almost indefinitely, but my limits will permit me to illustrate only five of the most important.

I. My first incidental argument in proof of a future retribution is drawn from the history and character of our Savior.

1. Suppose you should send a universalist missionary to a colony who believed in a future retribution. Suppose you should select your most talented, best educated, most respected preacher. Suppose you employ him for the express purpose of declaring to them what,

you consider essential truth in relation to the condition of mankind beyond the grave. Suppose he should enter upon his ministerial labors with zeal and animation. Suppose however that during the first year and a half he should not allude to the doctrine of no future retribution, which he was expressly commissioned to proclaim. What should you think of the man? Should you not affirm that he was unfaithful to his employer, unfaithful to the cause of truth, unfaithful to his heavenly Father? You certainly would. Now apply this illustration to our Savior. You believe that he was sent by the universal Father to be the redeemer of mankind. You believe that he was divinely commissioned to proclaim the everlasting gospel. You believe that his preaching was almost wholly confined to the jewish nation. You believe that this people with the exception of one sect believed in future rewards and punishments. You believe that Jesus declared to them the gospel, the whole gospel and nothing but the gospel. Now did he ever teach them that their belief in a future retribution was erroneous? No. Did he ever teach them that a perfect retribution took place in this world? No. Did he ever teach them that there would be no rewards for the righteous and no punishments for the wicked in a future existence? No. Did he ever teach them that all would be happy when they entered the next conscious being? No. I answer all these questions in the negative, and I speak with great positiveness. For if any such instructions could have been found in the scriptures they would have been printed in large letters on the title page of all your publications. I challenge you or any other person to mention one single text which contains either of the ideas described. Now you admit that the divine Savior knew what would be the future condition of the sinful and holy. If then

your doctrine of no future retribution be true, must you not regard him as unfaithful, unfaithful to the Father who gave him his commission, unfaithful to the cause of truth, unfaithful to the souls of his hearers, since he made no mention of the fact during his whole ministry? You must if you would preserve consistency and judge him by the same rule you would apply to your missionary. Yes, you must admit, either that Jesus was unfaithful, or that your doctrine of no future retribution is erroneous, or that it was not considered of sufficient importance to be once mentioned. There is no other alternative. You may take which side of the dilemma you please. For my own part I have no hesitation in expressing my honest convictions on this question. And consequently I affirm, that if your doctrine of no future retribution be true, I must regard our Savior as unfaithful to his high office; my trust in him as an infallible teacher is destroyed. On the other hand, if the doctrine of future retribution be admitted, his course appears wise, consistent and faithful; and he becomes worthy of unlimited confidence.

2. Suppose your missionary should appear to his hearers to teach distinctly, future rewards for the righteous and future punishments for the wicked. Suppose he should use the same words and phrases which they employed to express their belief in these sentiments. Suppose they were perfectly satisfied with his teachings in relation to this subject, and regarded his views as sufficiently orthodox in this particular. What should you think of his conduct? Should you not affirm, that he was acting a deceitful part, in thus attempting to make his hearers believe that his opinions on this question were in union with their own; when in reality they were directly the opposite, and when he had been expressly commissioned to proclaim the doctrine of no

future retribution? You surely would. Now apply this illustration to our Savior. His hearers believed in future rewards and punishments. They used certain words to express their belief on this subject. Jesus knew that these words were employed and understood in this particular sense. Still he freely used them. He plainly and unequivocally declared, that the righteous should be rewarded in *ouranos* or heaven, and that the wicked should be punished in *gehenna* or hell. The passages in which these words occur have already been quoted; and it has been satisfactorily shown that his hearers understand the former to imply future happiness, and the latter future misery. He gave no intimation that in his mind a different meaning was attached to the words in question. They never expressed the least dissatisfaction with his instructions on this point. Now had he so much as intimated that there would be no future retribution, you may rest assured that they would have raised an outcry which must have been heard to this period. He left the distinct impression that the prevailing opinion of his nation on this topic was correct. Now if he did not agree with them in sentiment; if he knew there was to be no future retribution; did he not act the part of a deceiver? Was it not gross deception to make them believe that he held to the doctrine of future rewards and punishments when he did not? Certainly. If you are consistent you must admit, either that the divine Jesus was guilty of glaring deceit, or that your belief is erroneous. I see no other alternative. Take which horn of the dilemma you please. For my own part I have no hesitation in expressing my honest conviction on this point. I therefore affirm, that if the doctrine of no future retribution be true, I must consider the Savior to be guilty of deception, and consequently unworthy of trust. But if

the doctrine of future rewards and punishments be correct, then his course appears wise, consistent and instructive; and he becomes entitled to our warmest confidence. I suppose you will say that the Jews believed in demons, and that our Savior used language in accommodation to their prevailing sentiments. In answer I would observe, that he taught great truths respecting God which were designed to root out all minor errors on this question. He assured them that our heavenly Father regulated the minutest events of this world, even the falling of a sparrow, and consequently there would be no work left for evil spirits. But all his instructions are specially adapted to confirm their belief in a future retribution as a fundamental truth of all true religion. So that an objection of this kind can have no force against my argument.

3. Suppose some of the hearers of your missionary should ask him the following question. "Reverend sir, do you think that the number of those is small who shall be saved?" Suppose he should answer in these words: "My friends, use your most persevering endeavors to secure your own salvation. Be assured, many will expect to enter the heavenly kingdom who must be greatly disappointed. Nor is this all. Ye yourselves shall see Luther, and Zuingle, and Socinus, and Arminius, and Wesley, and other worthy reformers in mansions of happiness, while some of you shall be cast into darkness and despair?" What should you think of such a declaration? What should you say of his conduct? Should you not charge him with falsehood? Should you not affirm that he had uttered what he knew would leave a false impression upon the minds of his visiters? You surely would. Now apply this illustration to our Savior. When he was on earth the following conversation occurred. "One asked him, master, are there few who shall

be saved? He answered, Force your entrance through the straight gate; for many I assure you, will request to be admitted who shall not prevail. If once the master of the house shall have arisen and locked the door, and *ye* standing without and knocking, say, master, master, open to us, he will answer, I know not whence ye are. Then ye will say, we have eaten and drunk with thee, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he will answer, I tell you, I know not whence ye are; remove hence all ye workers of unrighteousness. *Then* will ensue weeping and gnashing of teeth, *when ye* shall see Abram, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets received into the kingdom of God, and *ye yourselves* excluded; nay, people will come from the east, from the west, from the north, and from the south, and will place themselves at table in the kingdom of God." In reference to what salvation did a Jew ask this question? Salvation from the destruction of Jerusalem? Surely not; for the Jews did not believe such an event to be possible. They expected to be the triumphant party. Salvation from present sinfulness? Certainly not; for they manifested no anxiety or uneasiness on this subject. No; the question was doubtless proposed in accordance with the well known sentiment of the pharisees that all true Israelites were to share in the happiness of the future life. And to what does the answer of our Savior relate? To salvation from any temporal calamities? Surely not; for those to whom he spoke could not see Abram, Isaac and Jacob entering the christian church. They could not see them raised from the dead to be rewarded at the destruction of Jerusalem. They could not see multitudes come from the four quarters of the earth. They could not be saved from the most cruel persecutions by becoming his disciples. No. The distinct impression which he left on the minds of his

hearers must have been this; that all would not be saved from future punishment; that their chief concern was to become holy; that they need not trouble themselves about the welfare of others until they had first secured their own salvation from sinfulness. Now if he knew there was no danger of any future misery; if he knew that all would be saved the moment they enter upon the next conscious existence, why did he not give the honest inquirer a plain answer? Should a believer in future retribution ask you the same question, would you hesitate to furnish an honest reply, or should you mislead by your words? If he knew that all would be made holy and happy after death, was he not guilty of falsehood in affirming that some would not secure their salvation? If you are consistent you must either pronounce him a liar, or admit that your doctrine of no future retribution is erroneous. I know of no other alternative. Take which side of the dilemma you think proper. For myself I am ready to declare, that if your doctrine of no future retribution be true, I must consider the inspired Savior to have been guilty of falsehood, and consequently unworthy of confidence; but if men are to be rewarded and punished beyond the grave, then his answer to the Jew appears consistent and striking, and his character is delivered from the slightest suspicion of prevarication. Luke 13. 23.

4. Suppose your missionary should learn that a number of his unconverted hearers were obliged to engage in a bloody warfare. Suppose he should most earnestly beseech them to repent and obey the gospel, receive Jesus as their master and openly profess his name. Suppose he should assure them at the same time that their profession of religion would expose them to the severest persecutions and even to death itself. Suppose he knew, that by becoming practical christians they would expe-

rience less happiness and more misery in the present life, than they would by remaining in an unbelieving and sinful state? Suppose he firmly believed, that those who died in their sins would enjoy equal felicity hereafter with those who lived in the most perfect manner and suffered most in the cause of Christ. What should you think of such proceedings? Would you not call this a specimen of egregious folly? You would. Now apply this illustration to our Savior. When on earth he solemnly urged his disciples to adhere to his religion. At the same time he assured them that their profession would expose them to tribulation, persecution, cruelty, death. Their sufferings must have been much greater on account of their religion than they could have been in an unconverted condition. Now is it reasonable to suppose the benevolent Jesus would have urged them to such exposures, if he knew their happiness hereafter would be no greater than that granted to their enemies and murderers? If then he knew there was no future retribution, did he not exhibit consummate folly in entreating them to adhere firmly to his principles, when he knew their obedience would render their condition in the next world no better, and in the present existence much worse? For one inspired apostle declared, that if the christians of his day had no hope beyond this life, they were of all men most miserable. If you are consistent, must you not admit that your doctrine of no future retribution is false, or pronounce the anointed Savior guilty of folly and cruelty? Is there any other alternative? Take which horn of the dilemma you please. For my own part, if the doctrine of no future retribution be true, I must regard Jesus as guilty of great cruelty and foolishness, and consequently unworthy of confidence; but if rewards and punishments are hereafter to be equitably distributed, his course ap-

pears rational and commendable, and his character is rescued from the least suspicion of weakness or unprincipled ambition.

Thus, my dear sir, I have noticed a few particulars in our Savior's history and character which I cannot reconcile with your belief. If he either knew or believed that the doctrine of future rewards and punishments was false, I cannot excuse him from the charges of unfaithfulness, deception, falsehood, folly and cruelty; for his uniform mode of preaching and conduct can be accounted for satisfactorily on no other supposition; and consequently I must renounce my confidence in his fidelity, honesty, integrity, wisdom. I make these assertions in the deepest sincerity. They are not the hasty expressions of an excited moment. I have given days and weeks and months to the study of this subject. I therefore state my most deliberate, most solemn convictions. Yes; the moment I adopt your belief in the doctrine of no future retribution, that moment I must reject the Savior as a faithless, deceitful, silly and cruel impostor, if I exercise my reason according to the common rules of forming a judgment. But so long as I find future rewards and punishments plainly taught in the scriptures, so long I shall believe him to have been a faithful, honest, wise and benevolent messenger from heaven. If there is any way of answering this argument fairly I know it not; and I leave the evidence for your candid consideration.

II. My second incidental argument in proof of a future retribution is drawn from the history and character of the apostles.

1. Suppose Jesus Christ should now appear in person to twelve christian ministers. Suppose he should inform them that the doctrine of a future righteous retribution is not true. Suppose he should assure them that all

mankind will be equally happy on their admission to the next conscious existence. Would not these preachers be amazed beyond measure at the appearance of the Savior? Would they not be greatly astonished at his solemn declarations? Would not their prejudices be exceedingly shocked in having an important article blotted at once from their creed? Would not such a communication make a deep and lasting impression on their minds? Would they not refer to the important period of visitation and instruction in all their coming years? Would it be possible for them to conceal this important disclosure in their own bosoms? No; not without the greatest departure from the known laws of human nature; not without a greater moral miracle than any of a physical character which Christ wrought. Had they never referred to this event should you not believe they had conspired to deceive the community and were unprincipled impostors? You certainly would. Now apply this illustration to the twelve apostles. They were selected from those who firmly believed in future rewards and punishments. Their belief was thoroughly incorporated into their whole religious system. They would as soon have thought of doubting a future existence as the doctrine of a future retribution. Now if our Savior had once informed them that their belief on this point was erroneous would not their prejudices have been greatly shocked? Would they not have made an outcry which no one could have mistaken? Would they not have remembered the moment when their confidence in an essential and undisputed article in their confession was destroyed? Would they not have alluded to this circumstance both in their preaching and writings? Would not this course have been natural, according to the known and invariable laws of human nature? Now what is the fact? Do the twelve or any one of the

number ever allude to any such communication from their divine master? Do they ever intimate that their views concerning a future retribution had undergone a radical change? Do they ever allude to any such excitement as must necessarily have been produced by such a disclosure? No. Not in a single instance. Can you then believe that Jesus ever informed them that their faith in future rewards and punishments was erroneous? that the righteous and wicked would be equally happy at the resurrection? It is impossible. If you judge the apostles by the same rules you would apply to the same number of christian ministers of the present day, you must admit, either that Jesus never gave them to understand that there would be no future retribution, or that they acted a most miraculous part in never alluding to such a communication and consequent change in their faith, or that they conspired together to deceive the world on this most important subject. No other alternative occurs to my mind. I must believe the apostles retained their original belief in a future retribution, or that they were cunning impostors. I find no difficulty in making my choice; I give you the same liberty.

2. Suppose that Jesus Christ should personally command these twelve christian ministers to proclaim the doctrine of no future retribution. Suppose they should altogether disregard this injunction, and never preach the truth on this point either in private or public. Should you not consider them disobedient to their heavenly master, and unfaithful to the cause of truth? You would. Now apply this illustration to the apostles. Jesus commissioned twelve to proclaim the everlasting gospel. When he selected them from the other inhabitants of Judea they were of that class who believed in future rewards and punishments. If they renounced their belief in this doctrine, it must have been because

Jesus pronounced it erroneous. And if he gave them any such information, they were to impart it to mankind. For he commanded them to deliver the message of glad tidings to every creature. If true, this doctrine of no retribution must have constituted a very important part of their communication. If they believed its truth, they could not neglect preaching it without being guilty of disobedience and unfaithfulness. Some of the number recorded the instructions of their master; they also preached to jewish and gentile converts who believed in happiness for the righteous and misery for the wicked beyond the grave. Now can you point to one passage in the whole christian scriptures, in which the simple fact that there will be no future retribution is stated? Can you mention one instance in which they taught this sentiment either to Jews or gentiles? Can you find the idea recorded in their letters? No. If such texts existed they would have been exposed to the gaze of mankind long before this period of the world. You are assured that these inspired divines kept back nothing that was profitable for their hearers. They declared the whole counsel of God; and having omitted to state your doctrine is proof positive that it constituted no part of this counsel. Here then is the indisputable fact. Can you reconcile their course of conduct with your system? If they either knew or believed there would be no future rewards or punishments; if Jesus had commissioned them to proclaim this sentiment as a part of his religion, were they not guilty of disobedience in neglecting his instructions? and of unfaithfulness to the cause of truth? and of deceit in not removing so gross an error as the opposite belief from the minds of their hearers and readers? I must therefore believe, either that Jesus never taught them your doctrine, and that they had no belief in any such system, or that they

were disobedient, deceitful, unfaithful hypocrites. I find no difficulty in making my election, and I grant you the same liberty.

3. Suppose these twelve christian ministers should not only neglect to mention the doctrine of no future retribution, but continue to preach rewards and punishments in the next existence in their accustomed manner. Suppose they should use the same words and phrases which they had formerly employed in relation to this subject; and the very words and phrases which their hearers always understood to mean rewards for the righteous and punishments for the wicked in a future world. Would you not call them deceivers? Surely you would. Now apply this illustration to the apostles. They preached the same gospel which their master promulgated. They also taught those truths which they had previously believed, and which he had confirmed by his testimony. They used the same language to believers and unbelievers respecting a future retribution which they had employed to express their opinions on this subject before their conversion. I have already given copious extracts from their writings. I will trouble you with but one more example. Paul was taken from the jewish church. He was a pharisee of the strictest creed and the most persecuting disposition. He was supernaturally called to be an apostle. He received his knowledge of christianity directly from the ascended Jesus. Had he been instructed in the doctrine of no future retribution he would have declared it with great plainness and boldness. But he pursued a contrary course. When an opportunity arrived for him to give decisive evidence on the question, we find him confirming his jewish brethren in their former belief respecting rewards and pun-

ishments. Turn to the history of his ministry and you find these words. "But when Paul perceived that the one part were sadducees, and the other pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a pharisee, the son of a pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." And on another occasion he used this explicit language. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Now you cannot mistake the force of such declarations. You know the pharisees believed that the good and bad would live again; the righteous to be rewarded and the wicked to be punished. Paul distinctly stated that he still adhered to this part of his former faith; that he was still a pharisee in this particular, and appeals to his early friends in behalf of its truth. See how his doctrine was received, not merely on this occasion, but in all other places. It excited no opposition except from the unbelieving sadducees. Now when your preachers visit a society of believers in future retribution, and proclaim their opposite belief, is there not an outcry raised, and opposition manifested, and sometimes persecution practised? Look to the hearers of our Savior, the hearers of his apostles, the converts to whom the epistles were addressed. All, as you know, were believers in future rewards and punishments. Do you find one instance of complaint on account of any departure from their original belief on this question? Not in a single case; and this is proof conclusive that they could not have preached any thing new on this subject. Now if the apostles either knew or believed the doctrine of no future retribution was true, and still preached future rewards and punishments, or left the impression on the minds of their hearers that they believed this truth, must you not pronounce them wilful deceivers? Surely. I must then believe, either

that they had no belief in your system or that they were base impostors. I have no difficulty in saying which; take the same liberty.

4. Suppose that these twelve christian ministers, after they knew there would be no rewards and punishments beyond the grave, after they knew the future condition of mankind would not be in the least affected by their present conduct, should labor to confirm their hearers in the opposite belief. Suppose they should expose themselves to all kinds of hardship, fatigue, suffering, persecution, and even death itself, after they knew their future happiness would be no greater than that of their most vile and abandoned enemies and murderers. Would you not say that they acted a very unwise and foolish part? Would you not call it egregious folly to expose themselves to such unmitigated misery for the sake of inculcating error by their very example? You would. Now apply this illustration to the apostles. They cheerfully exposed themselves to every kind of insult and indignity and torment, and even to the most cruel and barbarous death. Take the case of Paul, since he was called directly by the risen Savior; since he received the whole gospel from his precious lips; since he was caught up to the third heaven, and must have known whether it contained any inhabitants, or provided any rewards for the righteous; or whether the vile and filthy and depraved were there uniting in the song of redeeming love. What was his life? One continued scene of labor, poverty, reproach, suffering and sorrow. He was scourged, whipped, stoned, beaten and tormented. What sensations did the condition of his jewish brethren excite in his bosom? 'Continual sorrow.' How did he serve the Lord? 'With many tears.' In what manner did he warn his Ephesian converts for the space of two years? 'With tears.' How

did he tell the Philippians that many among them were enemies to the cross of Christ? "Even weeping." But why all this zeal and crying and lamentation? Because some of his hearers did not adhere so closely to the gospel as to secure their share of earthly persecutions? Because in a very few years all would be released from suffering, and never more experience any torment? Now had he known or believed that all are to be made holy and happy the moment they enter upon the next conscious existence, how unwise his course? How childish his tears? How foolish his submission to persecutions? How silly his mental sorrow on account of the disobedience of his converts? For what did he thus labor and suffer? For mere nothing. Do men pursue such courses from no motives? The motive to do good is indeed powerful. But had he known there was no future retribution; that those to whom he preached were not made more happy on account of their goodness since it would expose them to unparalleled persecutions; must not his whole proceeding be ranked among the specimens of exquisite foolishness? But take into account the future righteous retributions of our Father, and you furnish an adequate motive for all his patience and perseverance and exertions. I must then believe, either that the apostles did not believe your doctrine, or that they were great fools in exposing themselves to such wretchedness without any proper motive; I find no difficulty in making my election; I cheerfully grant you the same liberty.

Thus, my dear sir, you have a few incidents from the history of the apostles. They were believers in a future retribution previous to their conversion to christianity. After this period they give no intimation that their former faith on this subject was erroneous. They never preach the doctrine of no future retribution in any shape or on

any occasion, which they certainly would not have omitted had it been taught by Jesus. They used the same language respecting future rewards and punishments which they had formerly employed for the same purpose. They exposed themselves to an almost unbroken series of insults and injuries for the sake of their religion. Now if they knew the doctrine of no future retribution to be true, I must regard them as guilty of disobedience, dishonesty, deception, falsehood and folly. I see no other alternative. This is my deliberate and settled conviction. My mind is so constituted that I can arrive at no other conclusion. But on the other hand if men are to be rewarded and punished hereafter according to their present characters, the whole course of the apostles appears wise and praiseworthy; deserving our reverence and imitation. You may take which horn of the dilemma you choose. For myself I cannot consider the chosen messengers of the divine Savior such consummate scoundrels and fools, and consequently I adhere to their faith respecting the future condition of mankind.

III. My third incidental argument in proof of a future retribution is drawn from the history of the church.

1. You know that the apostles early established christian churches in various places. You admit that those individuals who composed them were believers in a future retribution before their conversion from hethenism and judaism. You acknowledge that pastors were ordained over these several congregations, who were also originally believers in future rewards and punishments. Now if the inspired apostles had taught the doctrine of no future retribution, would they not have known and remembered the fact? Would they not have imitated their example? Would not their successors have proclaimed the same sentiments? Would not the

preachers and hearers for the three first centuries have received the truth on this question? Certainly, it could not have been otherwise. Let us then appeal to the testimony of the early Fathers. I have no special concern with their opinions on the subject in dispute, for they were uninspired and fallible mortals. But they were surely qualified to bear witness in matters of fact. They were prepared to state whether the doctrine of no future retribution was handed down by the apostles and received by christians in their day. On this question they could not practise deception or conceal the living truth. They had no possible motive to disguise their own sentiments. You may rely therefore on their evidence in support of facts of this description. Their decision on this question must be satisfactory to every candid inquirer.

2. Now what is the testimony of the christian fathers on this question? Do they inform us that the doctrine of no future retribution was believed and preached by the apostles, or embraced by themselves and their societies? Do they intimate that this doctrine had been broached, that any controversy had arisen on the subject, that any of their predecessors entertained such views? Or on the other hand, do they testify that a belief in rewards and punishments beyond the grave was handed down from the apostolic age and universally received by themselves and their contemporaries? To answer these questions fully and fairly and satisfactorily, you must either examine their writings which are extant, or you must consult some person who has given them a faithful examination. Is there a hint in any of their remaining works, that the doctrine of no future retribution was ever introduced into the christian church? No; I unhesitatingly answer in the negative. The truth of my assertion I shall not stop to prove. One of your own sect

has written the "ancient history of universalism," and he has not brought forward a single instance of the kind. Had any fact of this nature existed you may rest assured that it would have appeared in large letters on his pages. I regard the question as forever settled, that no trace of your doctrine can be found in the records of the church for many ages after the ascension of our Savior; it necessarily follows that it was unknown either to the apostles or their successors for many generations. Now will you affirm that the inspired apostles and christians for sixteen or seventeen hundred years were ignorant of this important doctrine; or will you admit that it has no foundation in truth. Take which side of the dilemma you please. For my own part I cannot believe without evidence. I must therefore conclude that if your doctrine had been true, it would have been known to the apostles; some traces of it would have been found in the records of the christian church; some controversies would have arisen on the subject; some hints of its corruption and banishment would have been discovered; but this not being the case, I must reason consistently, and consequently I must adopt the conclusion that the doctrine of no future retribution was never known to the apostles or christian fathers, and has no foundation in fact or reality.

3. What then do the ancient Fathers teach on this subject? They are full and explicit in relation to the future condition of mankind. Without a single exception they believed in future rewards and punishments. The truth of this assertion I could demonstrate by an abundance of passages from their writings, as a learned friend who has thoroughly investigated this question has furnished me with the necessary quotations. But as no man of intelligence will deny the correctness of my position, I deem it superfluous to fill my pages with the

extracts. I will however give a few sentences from some of the more important Fathers. Take the following from Justin who flourished about one hundred and forty years after Christ. "We christians maintain that the souls of men united with their bodies will be punished." "If all men knew these things, no one would indulge in sin for a short time, knowing he must go to everlasting condemnation by fire, but would rather restrain himself in every way and adorn himself with virtue, that he might obtain the good which comes from God and escape punishment." "The souls of the pious remain somewhere in a better place, and the unjust and evil in a worse, expecting the time of judgment; so those who are worthy to appear before God will die no more, but the others will be chastised as long as it pleases God that they should exist and be chastised." Take the following from Turtullian who flourished about one hundred and ninety-two. "The souls of the mass of mankind after their separation from the body descend to the parts below the earth, there to remain until the day of judgment. The souls of the martyrs alone pass not through this middle state, but are transferred immediately to heaven." "But in what state, it may be asked, does the soul remain during its abode in the lower parts of the earth? Does it sleep? Sleep is an affection of the body, not of the soul. When united to the body, the soul does not sleep, much less when separated from the body. No; the righteous judgments of God begin to take effect in this intermediate state. The souls of the good receive a foretaste of the happiness, and the souls of the wicked, of the misery, which will be assigned them as their everlasting portion, at the day of final retribution." Take the following from Origen, who flourished about two hundred and thirty years after Christ. "Various places will be assigned to men according to

their merits; they will suffer in proportion to their wickedness." These are sufficient to show you the decision of the ancient christians. Now how will you account for the fact that they uniformly taught the doctrine of future retribution? Had they ever heard that it was false; had they supposed it was not plainly revealed in the scriptures, would they have borne this harmonious testimony to its truth? You must either suppose that they all conspired to deceive after ages on this important question, a most absurd supposition; or you must suppose that they boldly and fearlessly proclaimed what they knew had been handed down from the apostles, and what they believed to be indisputably true. Take which horn of the dilemma you please. For my own part I believe their testimony in this matter of fact is to be implicitly received, and consequently I reject your doctrine of no future retribution as a very modern invention.

4. But perhaps you will tell me that a majority of the christian Fathers believed in endless punishment, and that my argument from their testimony will prove too much. I admit the fact, but deny the inference. Some unitarians make great account of this difference of opinion among the early preachers in justification of the course they pursue. They contend that if our Savior and his apostles had plainly declared that the punishment of the wicked would be endless, the *fact* would have been universally known by their converts and the Fathers, and consequently no occasion could have been furnished for dispute on this question, no divisions could have arisen on this subject. On the other hand, they argue that if Jesus and his apostles had plainly and explicitly declared that all future punishment would terminate in the final restoration of mankind to holiness and happiness, this *fact* would have been universally

known, and consequently all occasion of disagreement on this topic removed. But since they have not spoken decidedly on either side, since the question of the duration of punishment was not settled, occasion was furnished for the discussions and disputes of the early Fathers on this topic, and on this account you find them advocating different sentiments. Some held that the wicked would be raised to life and afterwards annihilated, such as Arnobius and Justin Martyr. Others believed in the final reformation and salvation of all sinners, such as Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia. The larger portion indeed used the word in reference to the future punishment of the wicked which we translate everlasting or eternal. Now this division fully proves that the doctrine of no future retribution was unknown in the first ages of the church; and that the certainty of future rewards and punishments was universally adopted, although the duration of future punishment was left unsettled. So that instead of the circumstance of the disagreement among the Fathers proving too much, it is precisely what some of my brethren appeal to in defence of their practice in leaving the duration of future punishment undefined.

What conclusion is to be drawn from the early history of the church? The first preachers must have known if the inspired apostles taught the doctrine of no future retribution. They would have mentioned the fact had it existed in some form or other. You find no allusion to such a circumstance in the history of the period. You find no trace of the doctrine in any christian writer for many, very many centuries after the crucifixion. The evidence is conclusive beyond a doubt that neither the apostles nor their successors believed the doctrine. You can neither trace its introduction into the church, nor

its corruption, nor its expulsion. Consequently you must conclude that it never had an existence, until very recently. On the other hand, had Jesus and his apostles taught the doctrine of a future retribution, this fact would have been known. It would have appeared somewhere in the writings of the early Fathers. It does appear with great prominence, distinction, clearness. The conclusion is irresistible that the doctrine is founded in eternal truth. Now you must admit, either that the christian Fathers were deceived or deceivers, or that the doctrine of future rewards and punishments was handed down from the apostolic age. You must also admit, either that your doctrine of no future retribution was never known among the early disciples, or that they combined to practise an imposition upon all succeeding ages. You must show when your doctrine was introduced into the church, when corrupted, when banished, or grant that it never had an existence among the believers for many centuries after our Savior. You may take which side of these several dilemmas you please. For my own part I regard the argument in proof of a future retribution from the history of the church to be perfectly satisfactory, conclusive and unanswerable.

IV. My fourth argument in proof of a future retribution is drawn from the character of the heavenly inhabitants.

1. All the inhabitants of heaven desire the salvation of sinners. Jesus makes us acquainted with their feelings in the parables of the lost sheep, the piece of silver and the prodigal son. He represents our heavenly Father waiting to meet the returning penitent a great way off. He assures us that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Yea, he informs us that there "shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than

over ninety-and-nine just persons which need no repentance." How is this to be understood? Let me give an illustration. You have five sons. Four of them obey your commands, improve their time and talents and privileges, abstain from vice and dissipation, form christian characters, become ornaments to society, and prove great blessings to all their connexions. The other son pursues a different course, disregards your wishes and instructions, neglects to improve his means and opportunities for education, takes to profligate courses, becomes thoroughly abandoned. Your paternal affection is not changed by his depravity. You love him as your offspring. You labor, entreat, threaten. You weep and pray and beg. But all to no purpose. When your hope is nearly exhausted, signs of repentance are visible. You encourage his good resolutions and aid his progress. He becomes a worthy christian. Now would not your heart rejoice in such a reformation? Would it not occupy your thoughts, enter into your secret devotions, make a part of your midnight dreams, and burst forth in your friendly conversation. Should you not feel more real joy at his return from wickedness, than you had ever experienced on account of the four who went not astray and needed not repentance? Is not this the natural consequence of your former sorrow and anxiety and almost despair? This then makes the passage appear true and beautiful. Such are the feelings of angels, of Jesus, of God towards sinners; and such their gladness when one returns from his evil ways to the service of his Maker. Yes, we are assured that God taketh no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that they should reform and live. You thus learn the disposition of the heavenly inhabitants towards the family of man. They all love human beings, take an interest in their welfare, desire their salvation, do all

to secure their holiness consistent with their moral freedom, and greatly rejoice when one is reformed.

2. Now how can you reconcile this disposition of the heavenly inhabitants with your system? With my views every thing appears natural, consistent, affecting. We are free agents. Our goodness is of our own acquisition. Our wickedness comes not by miracle. We cannot be made holy without our own consent and strenuous exertions. We cannot forsake our sinfulness unless we choose and labor for reformation. We are indeed rendered miserable by our depravity and happy by our goodness. But the future consequences of our conduct make us objects of special solicitude to the benevolent inhabitants of heaven. And well may they rejoice when a sinner is saved from future punishment. There is something in this to call forth their interest, their sympathy, their joy. But on your ground I certainly see no occasion for any thing of the kind. I see not how God can help taking delight in the death of the wicked. I should think all good beings ought to feel great pleasure in such events. Why? Because while the wicked live, they are doing evil to themselves and others, they are daily and hourly miserable, they are growing worse and worse. By removing them to another existence, you deliver them from all their sufferings, you put an end to their sinfulness, you save them the bitterness of repentance, you give them a passport to heavenly felicity; for they are to be pure and holy and happy the moment they enter upon the next conscious existence. Now is it an object of such intense solicitude and anxiety to the angels to have a man saved from the punishment of sin for a few short days or years? If they knew that all sinners would come among them in a state of holiness as soon as they arose from the sleep of death, could they have such feelings? If Jesus had

taught that there was joy in heaven at the death of a sinner, that God took pleasure in the death of the wicked, every thing would have appeared consistent with your doctrine of no future retribution; but as he has given lessons of a directly opposite character, I must believe n the future punishment of the wicked.

V. My fifth incidental argument in proof of a future retribution is drawn from the prescribed conditions of salvation.

1. Faith in Christ is one condition of salvation. This truth is plainly and repeatedly taught in the gospel. Read the concluding part of our Savior's commission to his inspired apostles. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." This declaration is explicit, and its truth is confirmed by your own experience and observation. You perceive that the obedient believer is saved from his sinfulness and its attendant punishment, and you know that so long as he remains holy he is in no danger of future torment. You also see that the disobedient unbeliever is condemned by his wickedness, and you know he must remain miserable until he forsakes his depravity. Take another confirmation of this truth from Paul. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Saved from what? Sin and its consequences. How? By being influenced to forsake whatever is wrong and form a christian character. Let Peter bear his testimony to the same sentiment. "Receiving the end of your faith even the salvation of your souls." What was the end of their faith? What was it expected to accomplish? The salvation of their souls from sin and its consequent punishment; the production of moral goodness and its attendant reward. Many more passages of a similar import might be quo-

ted, but these are sufficient for all present purposes. You see that this condition of salvation is unalterable in its nature. You observe that all who practise what Jesus has commanded exhibit a living faith in his moral instructions, and are delivered from vice and iniquity. You also notice that those who disobey his precepts manifest a want of practical faith in his mission, and are punished by their bad habits and wicked dispositions and actions. You never find an individual saved from sinfulness without compliance with the christian instructions. Now you know that many who have enjoyed gospel light leave this world in an unbelieving and sinful state of mind and character. Does death destroy this condition of salvation? This you must prove, or admit that future retribution is true. Mark 16. 16. Rom. 10. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 9.

2. Repentance or reformation is another condition of salvation. This is also plainly declared in the gospel. Listen to the following words of our Savior. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations." Repentance means the forsaking of wickedness and the practise of righteousness. Remission of sins means their forgiveness which can be received only on reformation. All this you know from observation and experience. When the intemperate man reforms and becomes temperate his sinfulness is pardoned; but some of the consequences of his disobedience remain for a long period. Hear Paul's account of his preaching. "I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Why did this inspired apostle consider this preaching profitable to all classes of hearers? Be-

cause without reformation no salvation could be experienced. What is the testimony of Peter? "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering. to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Here the implication is plain that those who did not repent must perish. God does not will or determine that any should perish, for he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but he grants free agency to all, and desires every individual to reform his evil ways. But why reform? So that we may not suffer the punishment of our wickedness either here or hereafter. These quotations are sufficient for my present purpose. You know that this condition of salvation is unalterable in its nature in this world. You perceive that all who reform are made happy in some degree by their goodness. But you never knew a sinner become good without repentance or reformation. You never heard of a person's being saved from his sins without forsaking them. Now will this condition of salvation be abolished at death. You know that many in christian lands leave the world unreformed. Will passing through the grave change their character and furnish them with holiness? This position you must prove, or admit the doctrine of a future righteous retribution. Luke 24. 47. Acts 20. 20. 2 Peter 3. 9.

3. Obedience to the laws of our Father is another condition of salvation. This is likewise plainly declared in the gospel. Hear the question of a jewish ruler and our Savior's answer. "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Would the divine Jesus have made this reply, if he knew the young man could have entered into life or happiness just as well by disobeying the command? Take another of his declara-

tions. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." The kingdom of heaven begins on earth, and you perceive that no one enters without obedience to the divine will. Look at the instruction of Paul. "God will render unto every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." Here the condition of receiving eternal life is perseverance in well doing. Now you can testify to the unalterable nature of this condition in the present world. You never saw a sinner saved from sin without obedience to the divine will. Will this condition be abolished at death? Will those who leave this life in a depraved condition be made holy without obedience? This you must prove, or admit the doctrine of future retribution. Mat. 19. 16, 17; 7. 21. Rom. 2. 6.

4. The kingdom of heaven is closed to certain characters. This is repeatedly declared in the gospel. Hear Paul's statement. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." There are many other passages equally explicit. Now you will ask if this does not refer to the present life? I admit that the kingdom of heaven is a phrase very generally used to denote the reign of the christian religion on earth. But that it sometimes means a state beyond the grave is perfectly evident.

What did our Savior say to his disciples at the last supper? "Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God." This of course refers to a future existence. And in those passages which threaten exclusion I have no doubt the meaning extends to another world. For otherwise the apostles were guilty of uttering the most common truisms. Suppose I should make the following address to my people next Sunday; "Brethren, let me assure you that thieves and drunkards and robbers and murderers are not christians. While they remain in this wickedness they cannot enter the school of Christ. But should they die impenitent and unreformed, they will inherit the kingdom of heaven the first moment they awake to an immortal life." This must have been Paul's idea had he received your doctrine. Is not this simple application of your principle of interpretation sufficient to discover its absurdity? Read the following passages from the book of revelation. "And there shall in nowise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Now you would limit all the passages to this life. But to make the sacred writers utter such unnecessary remarks for the sake of supporting a system seems to be charging upon them your own weakness without any proof. Will all the vile characters mentioned be admitted to the kingdom of heaven hereafter when they were too debased for christians to associate with in this world? This you must prove or admit the certainty of future retribution. 1 Cor. 6. 9. Mark 16. 25. Rev. 21. 27; 22. 15.

How stands the argument from the conditions of salvation? Those who believe, repent and obey, are saved

from their sinfulness and become righteous. Those who refuse to comply with these requisitions remain unreformed, unsaved and unholy. This we all see and understand. Now you say these conditions relate only to this life; I contend that they extend to the next. I believe that those who die unsaved will need salvation from their sinfulness before they can be happy; and no way of reformation is discovered but by the free choice and voluntary exercise of their own powers. You believe that all who die unsaved will be fitted for heaven in some mysterious and miraculous manner before they enter upon the next conscious existence, although your belief is not supported by a particle of evidence from reason or scripture. Now I reject your opinion for many reasons, three of which I will briefly mention. 1st. Neither our Savior nor his apostles has once declared that the wicked shall be happy after death; or saved without reformation. 2d. To limit the prescribed conditions of salvation to this life makes our Savior and his apostles appear very weak and silly in many of their most important instructions. For what was the amount of all their preaching to sinners on your supposition? "You cannot be a christian while you are a murderer. You cannot have happiness while you live in wickedness. Heaven is open to all of every class and description of characters; for your passage through the grave will mould you all into one likeness." 3d. There are passages which prove conclusively that the conditions of salvation are not limited to the present existence. Take one or two for a specimen. Our Savior uses this language to his apostles. "Now the brother shall betray the brother to *death*, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be *put to death*. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that shall endure to

the end *shall be saved.*" Here you see that death, certain, literal death, was predicted to them, and still they were promised salvation if they endured to the end. From what then could they be saved? Not death, for this was predicted. Not sin, nor temporal calamity, nor destruction of Jerusalem; for the salvation comes after death. Surely the meaning is plain. If you continue faithful to my cause until death, you shall be saved from future misery; you shall be rewarded with a crown of life. Read these words of our Savior. "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Give this passage your interpretation. "If you reject me for the sake of escaping persecution and death, you will be destroyed at Jerusalem." This reads very well. But take the other part. "If you lose your life in my cause, you shall escape the destruction of Jerusalem after you are dead." This makes nonsense and falsehood. We must then refer this to the future world, and believe that although we die in the cause of goodness we shall be great gainers; and if we secure all this world's goods and a long life by disobedience, we shall be infinite losers. The writer to the Hebrews makes this declaration. "Jesus Christ became the author of *eternal* salvation unto all them that *obey* him." Here the salvation is not temporal but eternal; it is not to all but only the obedient. So that Christ never saves any either here or hereafter except the obedient. I think enough has been said to show that the conditions of salvation extend beyond the grave; and consequently I regard this argument in proof of a future retribution perfectly conclusive and unanswerable. Mark 13. 12, 13. Mat. 10. 39. Heb. 5. 9.

Thus, my dear sir, you have the five arguments which I promised at the beginning of this communication. Can you possibly reconcile the indisputable facts which

I have presented with your doctrine of no future retribution? I know of no way in which that can possibly be effected. So long as these facts remain, so long the evidence for future rewards and punishments must stand, perfect and unanswerable. I appeal to you as a man of candor, of honesty, of intelligence, and request you to review each statement separately, and yield to the satisfactory proofs advanced; or furnish a fair answer to my reasoning, testimony and conclusions.

LETTER IX.

My Dear Sir,

I will now attend to your objections to the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. I have examined many of the publications of your party to ascertain what they contain on this point. Some of their objections are so inappropriate that I cannot consider them deserving a moment's attention. Others may be turned with tenfold power against your own views. All which relate to endless misery I omit of course. None that I have discovered have much plausibility. I will however endeavor to answer all that I believe can have the least influence upon candid minds of any description.

I. One objection to a future righteous retribution may be expressed in this language. "We do not find future rewards and punishments taught in the Old Testament, and if the Jews lived without this knowledge, why cannot christians?" In answer I submit the three following remarks.

1. You contend that the Jews were not divinely taught the doctrine of a future retribution Some of your party also assert that the knowledge of a future life is not

revealed in their scriptures. Now if they lived without knowing any thing of another existence, why cannot christians? If they had no crucified Savior, why was the death of Jesus needed? What need was there of giving us any further revelation, since the favored people lived and died in ignorance of its discoveries? You perceive that this mode of reasoning proves too much, and consequently destroys the whole force of your objection.

2. Suppose I should admit that the Jews were not taught the doctrine of a future retribution. What follows? Why, that the revelation of this truth was absolutely needed to produce obedience to the divine laws. Read the history of that singular nation. Were they not a stubborn and rebellious race? Were they not constantly murmuring against heaven? Did they not frequently relapse into idolatry? Just pause a moment and consider the nature of this crime, especially to those who had such indisputable tokens of the divine presence? Look at the conduct even of several of their greatest, wisest and best characters. Is it not perfectly evident from the state of morals among them in almost every period of their existence that some more powerful motives were needed to produce reformation and holiness? Your very objection then furnishes a most powerful argument against your own system.

3. I will briefly state what I believe to be the exact truth on this question. The Jews early cherished some faint belief in another existence, and of some kind of rewards and punishments hereafter for the conduct of the present world. This I think can be satisfactorily proved. That they entertained this belief in the time of our Savior, with the exception of one sect, no intelligent person can doubt. That their faith in both these facts was feeble and inoperative every one must ac-

knowledge. That the intimations of these doctrines in their sacred writings are few and obscure no one will deny; and I think these facts are calculated to teach us that such indistinct and inoperative views of the nature and character of the future life are unable to furnish any high degree of virtue or piety. The Jews of the present day believe in another existence, in the spirituality of the soul, and in a righteous retribution for the deeds done in the body, as I was lately informed by a most learned and estimable man of their church; and they profess to derive these articles of belief from the Old Testament. You perceive then that the very circumstance you mention as an objection to my doctrine furnishes one of the strongest presumptions in its favor. I have no doubt great injury has been done to the cause of truth by quoting passages from the hebrew scriptures in proof of future rewards and punishments, which have no real bearing on the point. But because men have wrongly applied some texts, does this destroy my argument? How very often have your preachers quoted texts from the same source to prove your doctrines, when not one of the number was designed to favor such sentiments? I consider your first objection fairly and fully refuted.

II. A second objection to a future righteous retribution may be thus stated. "We frequently hear more said in one modern sermon concerning future rewards and punishments than we find in all the discourses of our Savior and his apostles, and hence we conclude the doctrine is of human origin." In reply I offer the three following observations.

1. I hear more said about the doctrine of no future retribution in one universalist discourse than I find in the whole bible. Point me to the passage in which either Moses or the prophets ever taught such a senti-

ment. Mention the chapter and verse in which either Jesus or his disciples gave the least hint of such an opinion. Can you do either? Now you will remember that the inspired preachers of the gospel addressed those who believed in future rewards and punishments. Your ministers frequently enjoy opportunities of preaching to those who entertain a similar belief. Do they observe the same guarded silence on their peculiar views? Do their sermons resemble in this particular those recorded in the christian scriptures? On your own mode of reasoning must I not pronounce your system of human origin and contrivance? And does not your objection return against yourself with redoubled power?

2. The very statement of this objection indicates the manner in which many persons embrace universalism. They have been accustomed to hear the calvinistic doctrine of a burning and endless hell proclaimed with great frequency and boldness. They perceive that many passages of scripture are quoted in its defence. They have only a superficial acquaintance with the sacred writings. They are at length aroused to meditate on this important subject. They cannot reconcile such a sentiment with the goodness or mercy or paternal character of their heavenly Father, or with the benevolence and compassion and mission of their Savior. They turn to the bible and give it a hasty perusal. They find but here and there a passage which appears to prove the truth of such a doctrine, when they expected to discover scores on almost every page. They ascertain that many which have been quoted for this purpose have no connexion with the controversy whatever. They learn that plausible explanations of a different nature can be given to many more. Finding the testimony of scripture so different from what they anticipated, they rush to the opposite extreme. They conclude there can be no fu-

ture retribution because it is not formally and explicitly declared on all occasions. I have no doubt this is one prolific source of conversion to your opinions. And the very statement of these particulars will serve to show the futility of your objection.

3. I will now state what I believe to be the real truth on this question. I have already alluded to the hebrew scriptures. In a former communication I gave some hints in explanation of the circumstances under which the gospel was promulgated. Ideas of a similar character must be mentioned in this connexion. Our Savior and his apostles addressed those who believed in a future retribution, as your own writers admit. Consequently they had no occasion to introduce the doctrine as any thing unknown or doubted or disbelieved. They appealed to it as a motive and thus gave their confirmation of its truth and importance. You will remember that they had many new truths to deliver, many controversies to settle, much unbelief and wickedness to overcome. You cannot expect therefore that they would be constantly introducing a sentiment which no one rejected. Keep these particulars in mind when you search the records of our faith, and you will need no further reply. I once took up a corrected translation of the New Testament. I perused it carefully in reference to this question. I wished to ascertain how often and on what occasions the doctrine of future retribution was recognised, implied or distinctly taught. I kept in mind the belief of the hearers. And I must affirm, that I discovered an acknowledgment of the doctrine in every place where the circumstances either required or permitted. I considered it ingrained into the whole system of christianity. It is regarded as a central and indisputable and fundamental principle. And had I found it oftener mentioned I am not sure but I should have called

it a forgery in those instances; for it would have appeared forced, unnatural, unnecessary. I should make precisely the same remarks concerning a future life. It is but seldom introduced in a distinct and formal manner, but almost uniformly taken for granted. The same state of mind which would unfit a person for finding a future retribution in the gospel would cause him to deny a future existence. By recollecting these important facts you will perceive that the very infrequency with which future rewards and punishments are formally introduced furnishes one of the strongest arguments for their truth. So that your second objection appears to me to be fairly and fully refuted.

III. A third objection to a future righteous retribution may be stated in these terms. "The doctrine of future rewards and punishments was believed by the heathen; it never made them virtuous; why then do we need such a belief to make us holy?" In answer I will make three separate remarks.

1. You will remember that but few of the gentiles had a *practical* belief in a future existence. They indeed hoped to live after death. They had some evidence for their faith. But neither their belief nor expectation was sufficiently powerful for the great purposes of morality and consolation. This is evident from the fact, that when their wisest and best philosophers buried endeared friends their grief was inconsolable. Their lamentations were heart-rending. Their expected support vanished like mist before the rising sun. And they were also all their life-time subject to bondage on account of the fear of death. What did they fear? The mere pain of dying? Not at all. Such a supposition is contradicted by the facts of history. No. They feared annihilation. If then their belief in a future life was so faint and powerless, their faith in a future retri-

bution could have exerted but precious little influence on their conduct; and consequently it is no objection to this doctrine to appeal to the moral condition of the heathen.

2. You must also remember that the heathen had little or no knowledge of the true God. They neither understood nor felt his paternal character. They knew nothing of Jesus. They had neither seen his perfect example, nor read the history of his life. They were generally destitute of the means of a proper education. They were under the influence of ignorance and error in almost every particular. They received no religious instruction. They had no perfect code of morals. And to expect such nations to lead christian lives, merely because they had a belief in a future retribution as firm as their faith in another existence, would be the height of absurdity. Their sages declared that it was in vain to expect a general reformation until heaven should interfere in their behalf. They did not comprehend the nature, extent or obligations of virtue; and they did not reduce to practice all the knowledge of duty which they did possess. So that to object to the doctrine of future retribution, because the benighted heathen were not influenced by it to live a sober, righteous and godly life, is extremely illiberal and foolish.

3. But the moral condition of the heathen furnishes an unanswerable argument against your system instead of an objection to the doctrine of a future retribution. For you must remember that they were human beings. They possessed human feelings. They were no more insensible to mental or bodily pain than christians. They had as keen a penetration into the sufferings of others. They could as distinctly perceive that sin was punished on earth. All that you know on this subject they knew. Still their knowledge did not produce re-

formation and good morals. This it should have done if it is sufficient for the moral welfare of the world. But not having done this, is not an unanswerable argument furnished against the moral power and influence of your system? Surely. Not only so. What gave them their belief in a future retribution? Their own knowledge and experience and observation. They noticed the inequalities of the present existence. They saw the virtuous persecuted and overwhelmed with affliction. They saw the wicked prosperous and rioting in the pleasures of earth. Their own hearts and consciences caused them to utter such exclamations as the following. If the gods are just there must be another existence, so that the good may be rewarded and the wicked punished. Your appeal to the state of the heathen then is turned against your own system, and instead of furnishing an objection to a future retribution, is one of the strongest arguments in its favor.

IV. A fourth objection to a future righteous retribution may be thus stated. "You appeal to fear, the lowest passion in human nature, when you preach future misery; now obedience to the divine will ought to flow from the principle of filial love." In answer I submit the following remarks.

1. Did not our Creator originally implant the passion of fear in the human heart? Did not Adam manifest its power when he had disobeyed his maker? Did not Cain exhibit its influence when he had committed murder? Has it not been experienced in a greater or less degree by almost every member of the human family? Did not fear dwell even with the anointed Jesus? Is it not now the most influential principle in the bosom of mankind. Certainly; you will not return a negative answer to these inquiries. Why then did a Father of infinite love so arrange our constitution? For good or

for evil purposes? For good surely, because a being of infinite wisdom and benevolence could not endow us with any principle which should necessarily be productive of evil. What good then was this passion of fear designed to effect? It was intended to deter us from sin, so as to save us from its punishment; and thus to promote our real happiness by securing our obedience to the divine law. Is it then wrong to appeal to the passion of fear which was implanted for the production of the greatest blessings? Your objection therefore is of no force, and applies more directly to the Author of our nature, than to those who make use of its various principles for the purposes originally intended.

2. Is not an appeal made to the passion of fear by every government human and divine? You are a father. Do you never warn your children to avoid certain actions and courses of conduct? Do you not assure them that disobedience will be punished in some way or other, sooner or later? Do you not even threaten them with positive infliction in certain aggravated cases? And what is all this but a direct appeal to fear? Your neighbor is an instructer of youth. How does he regulate his pupils? Does he not warn them of the evil consequences of idleness and disobedience? Does he not threaten to deprive them of some privileges or even to inflict corporal punishments, when no other remedies will answer? And what is all this but an appeal to the passion of fear? And what are the laws of our country? Do they not mention penalties of almost every description? Are not these almost daily inflicted on transgressors? Are not many deterred from the commission of crime by fear of human punishments? Surely. And are not most men daily actuated by this principle? Why do you resist temptation? Why do you shun the

precipice? Why do you protect your body from the weather? Because you fear the consequences of an opposite conduct. And are there not hundreds and thousands of the best christians on earth who were induced by fear of punishment to consider their ways, reform their characters, acquire habits of virtue and piety? And even in your own preaching do you never appeal to this principle? O yes. You speak of an earthly hell whenever expediency requires. What is the difference in telling the sinner that the consequences of his wickedness will last till death, or in extending them beyond the grave? In the principle itself, there is no difference whatever. You therefore appeal to this same lowest passion in human nature; and thus destroy the force of your own objection.

3. Has not our heavenly Father; has not the anointed Savior; have not the inspired apostles, repeatedly appealed to the passion of fear? Take a few examples. In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. What do you call this? Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear *him* who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Here something after the death of the body is to be feared. Knowing the terrors of the Lord we persuade men. I could multiply extracts of a similar character almost without number. And are not all these a direct appeal to the passion of fear? Now can we imitate better examples than those mentioned? Can we know more on this subject than our Savior? Shall we be in danger of deceiving people if we use the same language in addressing believers in a

future retribution, which he and his apostles used in preaching to a similar class of hearers? If they did not stop when every threatening was delivered to assure their converts that all retribution was limited to this world, ought we to deviate from their common practice. If they took no pains to prevent their warnings from being misunderstood, need we feel any anxiety when using similar expressions? Now I cheerfully admit that fear is the lowest passion in human nature. I uniformly preach that our obedience should flow from a filial love to our heavenly Father. But this principle is not always sufficiently powerful to produce reformation, or restrain from wickedness, or stimulate to perseverence in holiness. This we all know from our own experience and observation. And consequently a remedy is provided in this passion, and an example of appeal to it furnished by the highest authority. I also believe that this like every other principle of our nature may be abused and has been shamefully abused, and no one has exposed these abuses more fearlessly than myself. Your objection is therefore turned against your own course with redoubled force.

V. A fifth objection to a future righteous retribution may be expressed in the following terms. "When you preach future rewards, you appeal to the principle of selfishness; you make religion a mere mercenary service; now we ought to love and serve our Father without any expectation of future recompense." Three observations will place this subject in a proper light.

1. There is a great difference between selfishness and self-love. Selfishness regards present interest to the neglect of the future; private welfare to the neglect of public. Self-love takes into account the whole of human existence, and the happiness of the whole family. This is the proper principle of human action; and this

is the principle to which I appeal. Let me illustrate. You are placed in this world by a kind Father. He created you for happiness. He planted certain laws in your nature, and revealed them more plainly in his word so that you may secure the grand object of your creation. You are destined to survive the dissolution of the body and live forever in a spiritual world. Your rational and moral nature undergoes no change except through your own exertions and the influence of circumstances. I therefore use every possible motive to induce you to obey these laws so as to secure real happiness both for time and eternity. Obedience may sometimes produce great suffering, require great self-denial, expose to great persecution; but the future recompense comes in here as a support and stimulus to exertion. If this life has no connexion with another, then this misery might in many cases be avoided by disobedience. In my estimation therefore you appeal wholly to the principle of selfishness, for you advise people to secure the greatest possible degree of earthly happiness, without any regard to the future existence. You teach that every man is fully and equitably rewarded and punished on earth; and thus give license for as much injury to our neighbors as will yield us more satisfaction than misery at the present time. If this is not gross selfishness then I know nothing of the subject. So that your objection applies more especially to your own system.

2. Now do we not appeal to the principle of self-love in our dealings with those under our authority? Do we ever appeal really to any higher principle? You exhort your children to be virtuous. Why? Simply that they may be happy. You entreat your pupils to be industrious. Why? Simply that their increased knowledge may increase their happiness. We beseech our hearers

to be righteous. Why? Simply that their goodness may qualify them for higher degrees of felicity. Now is there not something more pure, noble, elevated, in laboring for a future existence in connexion with the present, than in confining our views to this short pilgrimage? Which is the most direct appeal to selfishness, to tell a man his christian goodness will effect his enjoyment only in this life, or in assuring him that its consequences will be endless? I leave you to decide these questions. I think you will find that the charge of selfishness belongs peculiarly to your system.

3. Have we not scriptural authority for such appeals? Read the promised rewards of our Savior. Did they not extend beyond the grave? Take those which I have already quoted as a sample. Did he not himself look for joy beyond the crucifixion? Was not the hope of this reward a powerful motive, in inducing him to submit to the suffering and ignominy of the cross? Was it not this expectation which supported the apostles under all their trials and persecutions, nerved them for conflict and for martyrdom? And what has sustained the afflicted children of God in every age and country? The expectation of a heavenly reward. Take this away and you destroy the strongest incentive to great and noble deeds. I say then to all, be holy. Why? That you may be happy now, happy in death, happy in another existence. And if this is an appeal to selfishness, then I am supported by the example and authority of the divine Savior.

VI. A sixth objection to a future righteous retribution may be thus stated. "A good father will not punish his children without giving them ample warning; many have no satisfactory evidence that the wicked will be hereafter punished; consequently they must escape future torment

because God is a father of infinite goodness." In reply I will submit three observations.

1. Look at the punishments of transgression in this world. Your neighbor accidentally swallows poison. Sickness the most excruciating follows. This is the punishment of his disobedience to one of the laws of his nature. Was his physical suffering any the less on account of his innocence and ignorance? Did he have full and ample warning of the approaching calamity? You expose yourself to great fatigue and danger. To preserve your health you drink stimulating liquor. You are not aware of the strength of your potation, and become thoroughly intoxicated. Is your bodily pain any the less on account of your innocence and ignorance? You are caught abroad in a thunder storm. You do not understand the principles of natural philosophy. You seek shelter under the largest tree in the vicinity. Its very height attracts the lightning, and you are instantly killed. Is the consequence of your disobedience to the laws of nature any the less severe on account of your innocence and ignorance? No. I could produce hundreds of similar examples. You find persons often severely punished without the slightest warning. We learn from experience to avoid the causes of misery. Your objection then applies to the punishments of the present world in its full force.

2. Now I believe that christians have more evidence of future punishment than is given in many instances in this world. The sense of accountableness is implanted in your nature. Sin produces a fear of some mysterious retribution. The murderer carries a hell in his own bosom. It does not burn less fiercely as he draws towards the close of his mortal pilgrimage. And on the bed of death its torments are painful beyond description.

On your ground he should now rejoice that the hour of deliverance had arrived. So in other cases. Let a man be sincere in his views of the gospel, let him lead a conscientious and christian life, and he will remain calm and undisturbed in his last earthly moments. It is not essential to this result, that he should embrace one particular form of christianity; there have been happy death-beds in all denominations. But let a person live a wicked life, and no system of faith can give him comfort in the hour of departure, if he remains impenitent. There is a feeling of accountableness which cannot be silenced. Now if your doctrine be correct the most abandoned sinner need feel no uneasiness in his last moments. He need not repent of his iniquity, because he has already received his full punishment. He need not fear any thing beyond the grave, for nothing but unmingled happiness awaits his entrance into eternity. Such should be his condition if your theory is correct. How different is the testimony of facts. Not an individual who reads these pages will regret any of his good deeds when on the bed of death; nor rejoice in any of his deviations from the path of rectitude. Not an individual who neglects his duties and lives a sinful life, if he retains the full exercise of his reason in his last moments, but will *fear future misery*. The warnings therefore of future torment are greater than are given in cases of temporal retribution.

3. I confine these remarks to those who have been blessed with christian instruction. I believe future retribution will be perfectly equitable. Those who have sinned without law must be judged without law. Allowances will be made for all necessary deficiencies. An omniscient Father is able to make each one realize that perfect justice has been executed. We are told that Jesus will judge the world in righteousness. The secrets

of all hearts shall be laid open. It will then appear how much warning each one received of future retribution. Can he who was early taught his accountableness to an omnipresent governor; can he who felt deep compunctions of conscience for every deviation from the path of rectitude; can he who has read the instructions of our Savior; can he who has witnessed the inequalities of the present condition; can he who has been called by the providence of God to severe afflictions; can such a person affirm that he received no clear intimations of future rewards and punishments? Can he rid himself of a feeling of accountableness to some higher power? Can he divest himself of the fear of future judgment? Can he forget his various transgressions? Can he worship his Father without a love of holiness? No. Every sinner carries in his own bosom an unanswerable argument for the certainty of a righteous retribution. Many have professed to disbelieve this truth, but when aroused to repentance and reformation, they have declared that they could never make themselves really believe what they pretended. I have no doubt this is now the case with many. So that your objection is turned against your own system.

VII. A seventh objection to a future righteous retribution may be expressed in the following language. "Is it not most reasonable that the sinner should be punished in the same state in which he commits his crimes? Is it not most unreasonable that he should be recompensed in a second existence for the conduct of the first? On this supposition may not a person suffer in a third life for the wickedness of the second?" In answer I offer three observations.

1. How is divine retribution administered in this world? Precisely on this objectionable principle. Take as many examples as you please. Childhood is a preparation for

youth. Youth is a preparation for manhood. Manhood is a preparation for old age. Youth is made happy or miserable by the habits of childhood. Manhood is made useful and honorable and happy or useless, degraded and wretched, by the virtues or vices of youth. Old age is rendered joyful or unhappy by the character formed in youth and manhood. This you know from your own experience and observation. Is youth the same state as old age? Surely not. Then is it not unreasonable that old age should be punished for the dissipation of youth? I need not dwell upon a point so clear. We see for ourselves that throughout the whole of our mortal life, retribution extends from one state to another. We see that men are rewarded and punished in one state for their conduct in a preceding state. So that your objection applies with equal force against the present administration of the divine government as it does to a future retribution.

2. A future retribution seems absolutely necessary to vindicate the character of our Savior. He constantly urged the acquisition of holiness. He directed his followers to make any sacrifices, to practise any self-denial, to submit to the loss of all earthly possessions, to lose even their lives, rather than do wrong, rather than desert his cause, rather than become wicked. He repeatedly informed them that moral excellence was of the first importance, of the greatest worth, of more value than any temporal blessings. Now if we are to derive no benefit hereafter from our present labors; if our christian characters are to moulder into dust; if our holiness must be left this side of eternity, then I can see no proofs of divinity in our Savior's example or instructions. The character of our Father also suffers under your system. Take but one instance. Many sinners die in the very moment of committing some hor-

rid crime. Where do they receive their punishment? Not in this world surely. Had they lived, their sufferings would have been aggravated and long continued. If they enter heaven without any misery for the sin committed, do they not escape deserved punishment? What then becomes of the impartiality of our Father? Such questions I know have been proposed to your writers, and they have never met them fairly. They cannot give honest answers without abandoning the doctrine of no future retribution. They talk about the subject and throw dust before the eyes of their ignorant readers, while the only important point in dispute is wholly evaded. Unless the consequences of our good and bad deeds follow us beyond the grave we cannot respect the character either of Jesus or his heavenly Father.

3. But there is one most important principle in our Savior's instructions which seems to have been greatly overlooked by most denominations. It is this. He does not make any account of death in his discourses. He speaks of human beings going forward without interruption. He connects both worlds by the most intimate relationship. The next is a mere continuation of this. Whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall *never* die. The expression in the original is much stronger than in our translation. Now just carry this idea to the interpretation of his teachings and you will find it of immense assistance in ascertaining their true meaning. When speaking of the prosperity and glory of his church his view extends to the future existence. When mentioning the rewards of his followers he extends the retribution to another world. When predicting the punishment of the wicked he stops not at the door of death. He sees through the partition which separates the present from the future. Look at the

following passage. Then will the king say to those at his right hand, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the formation of the world; for I was hungry and ye gave me food; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye lodged me; I was naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye assisted me; I was in prison and ye visited me. Regard this language in the highest degree figurative if you please, still you can produce no facts from history to prove that the early christians received an earthly reward in any degree corresponding to his sublime promises. You must enter the world where persecution ceased. The same is true of very many of the lessons of our Savior. So that in every sense your objection is fully answered.

VIII. The last objection which I shall notice may be thus stated. "If the arguments for future retribution prove any thing, they prove too much; for they prove that many saints, such as David, Paul, Calvin, our pious forefathers, and others who have committed great crimes, must hereafter suffer the consequences of their wickedness; and this is more than the advocates of the doctrine wish proved." In answer I will make three remarks.

1. I cheerfully admit that the arguments for a future retribution do prove that every individual must suffer the just consequences of his iniquity in some form or other. This constitutes the excellency and the fearfulness of the doctrine; for this establishes the impartiality of our Father, and warns every person that he must eat of the fruits of his own doings. I therefore believe that David will experience less happiness on account of his transgressions; for you have evidence in his own writings that they tormented him in a greater or less degree while on earth. I do also believe that

Paul's share of future happiness will be diminished on account of his cruel persecutions, although he aimed at the promotion of the divine glory; for you know the recollection of them rendered him truly humble and gave him no small share of uneasiness, as you learn from his repeated reference to the subject. I do likewise believe that Calvin must suffer the natural consequences of his unchristian temper and unrighteous deeds, although he was sincere in his opinions and aimed to promote the glory of God. I further believe that our forefathers were imperfect christians, and like all the children of our impartial parent must be rewarded precisely according to their deeds. What I say concerning others I believe in relation to myself. He that knowingly disobeys must suffer severely, while he that ignorantly transgresses shall be beaten with few stripes. Retribution must be just and equitable, or our Father is not impartial. We are assured that he is no respecter of persons, and consequently will reward every man precisely according to his character.

2. I am not however surprised that this objection has been stated. Orthodox opinions and preaching and conversation have called it into existence. They teach us that the elect will not suffer hereafter for the sins of this life. Many whom they claim as among this number have been guilty of great wickedness. Many whom they rank with the reprobate have sustained much better characters. They assure us that if God changes the heart of the most abandoned wretch on earth at the last moment of his mortal existence he will escape all future punishment. Here is the doctrine of universalism. *You* merely say that *all* are elected. The principle in both is the same. Yours is much the most rational and benevolent of the two; for it does not ascribe so great a degree of *partialism* to the universal Father. And I

believe most firmly that the calvinistic notions of election and instantaneous conversion have been at the foundation of your success in obtaining adherents. There is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous; and but half a step from calvinism to universalism. I reject both as irrational and unscriptural. I believe in a perfect God, in a perfect retribution; in no partialism in the one, in no favoritism in the other.

3. The erroneous views which prevail in relation to the nature of future retribution have aided both systems. Many suppose that they can be made happy by entering heaven. If they can but secure an entrance within its enclosure they expect to enjoy perfect felicity. They do not seem to know that the kingdom of heaven must be within them; that their real happiness must always depend upon the moral state of their soul; that a sinful person would find the society and employments of purified spirits their greatest torment. Others believe that hell is a place of fire and brimstone, or something external which will give them misery. They do not seem to know that hell consists in the depraved state of the soul, and that so long as their depravity continues their punishment must remain. Future happiness is the natural consequence of religious goodness. Future misery is the natural consequence of sinfulness. No one can become sinful or holy without his own consent and exertions. No one can become happy without holiness. So when we speak of christians suffering the natural consequences of their wickedness in another life, many profess to be astonished. They believe that all who can get into heaven will be perfectly happy and all who go to hell must be perfectly miserable. They give figurative language a literal interpretation. They do not consult the plain teachings of scripture and the clear deductions of reason. Look into society and you

may see every variety of character. Strip each individual of all disguises. Let the true state of the soul in every instance be known. Remove all external causes of happiness and misery. And what would be the consequence? Why the person of most goodness would experience the most happiness. The person of most wickedness would suffer most wretchedness. Between these two there would be every degree of suffering and enjoyment. Each individual would have as much of heaven as he possessed holiness; and as much of hell as he retained of depravity. Not very dissimilar I conceive will be our condition on entering the next existence. All will in this way know themselves thoroughly. By taking this view you can see how the sins any one has committed must detract from his qualifications for felicity, and consequently you can understand how the happiness of a saint may be less on account of great crimes. We are told that in our Father's house are many mansions, and so provision is made for every degree of moral excellence; provision is made for rewarding or punishing every individual precisely according to his deserts. And as these views prevail in the community the doctrines of a partial or a total election will be abandoned.

Thus, my dear sir, have I answered the principal objections to the doctrine of a future righteous retribution. I have not intended to omit any of the least consequence. Some you know have already been noticed; others will claim a share of attention before I finish the discussion. Let me ask you to examine my answers, and inform me of the instances in which they do not appear satisfactory.

LETTER X.

My Dear Sir,

I will now endeavor to refute the arguments which your writers have advanced in support of the doctrine of no future retribution. I know indeed that one who formerly ranked among your ablest preachers made the following declaration. "It is not pretended as we know of, that the scriptures prove there will be no future punishment." But within the few last years passages have been quoted in proof of this belief. One of your number has published an hundred arguments in defence o universalism. I perused the tract with the greatest astonishment. I cannot make myself believe that the author supposed the texts adduced presented any decisive evidence in favor of his distinguishing views. Before I proceed to the main business of this communication, I will make a few remarks on the kind of testimony needed for your purpose.

In the first place, to prove your system true, you want clear, direct, explicit statements of the fact, that a perfect retribution takes place on earth, and that there will

be neither rewards nor punishments hereafter for the deeds done in the body. Passages of scripture which teach such sentiments would put an end to the controversy. None of this description can be produced. This single circumstance is enough to satisfy my mind of the unscriptural character of your theory.

In the second place, many of your proof texts are quoted from the Old Testament. On your own principles of interpretation, these passages are nothing to your purpose. For you contend that a future life was not made known to the Jews, and consequently to suppose that future happiness was promised to all is a gross absurdity and contradiction. This very admission on your part destroys at once all evidence from this quarter. I shall however briefly allude to some of the quotations you make from the hebrew scriptures, for the purpose of showing their irrelevancy.

In the third place, you quote many passages from the New Testament which have no bearing upon the question at issue. Take one illustration. You say that Jesus died for the salvation of all mankind. I admit the truth of your assertion. But does this statement prove that those who die impenitent and unreformed will be saved from all future misery? By no means. Then it has nothing to do with the controversy. It may prove restorationism, but has no connexion with universalism. I must however give a passing notice to such quotations to exhibit their inappropriateness.

In the fourth place, most of the texts you quote appear to me to furnish the strongest possible evidence against your own doctrine. Take one example. You affirm that Jesus is to be the Savior of all men. Very well. How is the sinner saved? Only by becoming holy. Now many leave this world unreformed. If Jesus is to effect their salvation in the only way revealed, then

surely there is a future retribution. If on the other hand they are saved by passing from this world to another, or by a miracle at the resurrection, then Jesus has no concern in their salvation; he is in no sense their Savior. These passages you perceive may prove restorationism, but have no bearing upon universalism. I shall however give a few specimens to show their insufficiency for your purpose.

Finally, I must be permitted to state the distinct and deep impression left on my mind from the perusal of a large portion of the writings of your denomination. It is this. The authors of these works seem to me to have determined that the doctrine of no future retribution shall be established on some foundation. An effort is then made to explain away all opposing texts. In this business various contradictory expositions are given; some at times plausible, some nonsensical, and some manifestly absurd. Then every passage which might lead an unthinking reader to doubt is produced in defence of your doctrine, and supported by many round assertions, and no small share of sneers at opposite views. I could illustrate these remarks by many selections did my limits permit; but as I shall have occasion hereafter to adduce a few specimens of your interpretations of scripture, I proceed to the appropriate business of the present letter.

I. You assert that God made a covenant with Abraham, that in him and his seed all nations should be blessed. You refer to a class of passages in the bible in proof of your position. You then infer that there will be no future retribution. Now your inference does not follow from your premises. For your proof texts do not say *when* the promised blessing shall be received. They do not intimate that a perfect retribution takes place on earth, or that there shall be no rewards and

punishments beyond the grave, and consequently have no bearing on the question at issue.

II. You assert that God has declared with an oath, that unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. You refer to a class of passages in proof of the truth of your assertion. You then infer the doctrine of no future retribution. Now your inference has no connexion with your premises. For your proof texts neither declare nor intimate, that a perfect retribution takes place in this world, nor that there shall be no rewards and punishments beyond the grave, and consequently have nothing to do with the controversy.

III. You assert that God has purposed and willed the salvation of all men. You mention a class of texts in proof of your statement. You then infer that all retribution is confined to this life. Now your conclusion does not follow from your premises. For your passages of scripture neither affirm nor intimate that all are rewarded and punished according to their deeds on earth, nor that all shall be saved from future rewards and punishments, and consequently are not at all to your purpose.

IV. You assert that God will not retain his anger forever; and you adduce passages in proof of your position. You then infer that all will be made happy the moment they enter upon the next conscious existence. Now your conclusion is not legitimately drawn. For your texts neither prove that a perfect retribution takes place in this world, nor that the divine anger or punishment will cease with temporal death; and consequently have no bearing upon the controverted question.

V. You assert that God is the Father of the whole human family; and you produce a class of passages which prove this assertion to be true. You then infer that none are to be rewarded or punished hereafter for the conduct of this life. This is not sound reasoning.

Is not God as much the Father of all men now as he ever will be? Does this fact prevent men from running into sin and experiencing its consequences? Does this prevent the sinner from reaping the bitter fruits of his transgressions long after his reformation? What reason then have you for supposing that his paternal love will operate so differently after death? None at all; and consequently this class of passages proves nothing in favor of your system.

VI. You assert that the gift of God is eternal life; and you prove this position by a passage or two from the scriptures. You then infer that there will be no future retribution. Your conclusion does not legitimately follow. Is not the present life the free gift of our Father? Have we done any thing to merit an earthly existence? Surely not. But does the possession of this gift make us all happy? Does it destroy our free agency? Does it prevent us from suffering the natural consequences of our transgressions? Now can you do any thing to merit another existence? Certainly not. Then your future life will surely be the gift of your heavenly Father; and given through Jesus, since he has furnished incontestable evidence of your immortality. But because you are to have another life, does it follow that men will not be rewarded and punished according to the deeds done in the body? By no means. Perhaps however you will say that *eternal life* means eternal happiness. Very well. This does not prove your position. For you are not informed when this happiness shall commence. You are told of some who received it when they became christians. You never heard of any one securing this blessing without moral goodness. You know that this gift is promised upon certain conditions. Your health is the gift of God in precisely the same manner. Without your own exertions you cannot secure

rid crime. Where do they receive their punishment? Not in this world surely. Had they lived, their sufferings would have been aggravated and long continued. If they enter heaven without any misery for the sin committed, do they not escape deserved punishment? What then becomes of the impartiality of our Father? Such questions I know have been proposed to your writers, and they have never met them fairly. They cannot give honest answers without abandoning the doctrine of no future retribution. They talk about the subject and throw dust before the eyes of their ignorant readers, while the only important point in dispute is wholly evaded. Unless the consequences of our good and bad deeds follow us beyond the grave we cannot respect the character either of Jesus or his heavenly Father.

3. But there is one most important principle in our Savior's instructions which seems to have been greatly overlooked by most denominations. It is this. He does not make any account of death in his discourses. He speaks of human beings going forward without interruption. He connects both worlds by the most intimate relationship. The next is a mere continuation of this. Whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall *never* die. The expression in the original is much stronger than in our translation. Now just carry this idea to the interpretation of his teachings and you will find it of immense assistance in ascertaining their true meaning. When speaking of the prosperity and glory of his church his view extends to the future existence. When mentioning the rewards of his followers he extends the retribution to another world. When predicting the punishment of the wicked he stops not at the door of death. He sees through the partition which separates the present from the future. Look at the

following passage. Then will the king say to those at his right hand, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the formation of the world; for I was hungry and ye gave me food; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye lodged me; I was naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye assisted me; I was in prison and ye visited me. Regard this language in the highest degree figurative if you please, still you can produce no facts from history to prove that the early christians received an earthly reward in any degree corresponding to his sublime promises. You must enter the world where persecution ceased. The same is true of very many of the lessons of our Savior. So that in every sense your objection is fully answered.

VIII. The last objection which I shall notice may be thus stated. "If the arguments for future retribution prove any thing, they prove too much; for they prove that many saints, such as David, Paul, Calvin, our pious forefathers, and others who have committed great crimes, must hereafter suffer the consequences of their wickedness; and this is more than the advocates of the doctrine wish proved." In answer I will make three remarks.

1. I cheerfully admit that the arguments for a future retribution do prove that every individual must suffer the just consequences of his iniquity in some form or other. This constitutes the excellency and the fearfulness of the doctrine; for this establishes the impartiality of our Father, and warns every person that he must eat of the fruits of his own doings. I therefore believe that David will experience less happiness on account of his transgressions; for you have evidence in his own writings that they tormented him in a greater or less degree while on earth. I do also believe that

placed in defending your system; and will endeavor to show you that these have still less connexion with the subject in debate than even the former supposed proofs.

X. Your system formerly rested on the following foundation. "All sin originates in the flesh, is punished in the flesh, and terminates with the flesh. The soul cannot sin, and when liberated must be happy; death sets it free and heaven becomes its home." A few years since one of your present preachers undertook to prove that we have no immortal souls, that the whole man moulders in the dust until the resurrection, and is then to come forth qualified for future felicity, as pure glass is made from sand and other ingredients. This new system was readily embraced by many who began to discover that the apology for an argument on which their old scheme rested, began to evaporate before the rising sun of truth. How the members of your denomination are divided between these two contradictory theories I am unable to state. I will give them both a passing notice.

1. I reject your theory that sin originates in the flesh, and that the soul cannot commit sin, as the old heathen doctrine that matter is the source of all evil. This has long since been exploded as a gross absurdity. A little acquaintance with works of philosophy would have saved your writers the mortification of having advocated the false systems of the gentiles. I would recommend to those who still adhere to this rotten foundation of universalism to make themselves somewhat acquainted with the principles of human nature and mental philosophy.

2. You take an entirely erroneous view of the nature and sources of sin. You suppose sin to begin and end in the flesh and no where else. If so the soul would do well enough provided the body would give it no trouble.

If so the soul is no agent and has no share in the process by which moral evil is produced. Now have you never learnt that sin consists in disobedience to the moral law of God, as well as to the physical laws which he has implanted in our constitution? Can the body or the flesh disobey this moral law? Surely not. Then obedience must be rendered by something else; and what is this something else, but the soul; the internal agent; the only agent; indeed all that constitutes the man a moral being? To say then that the body or flesh disobeys the moral law is a gross absurdity.

3. But you contend that sin is produced by temptations arising from the flesh. Suppose for the sake of argument I admit this. *How* is sin produced? Why, the soul yields to the temptations when they might have been resisted and should have been resisted. This the soul knows and feels. This constitutes the sin. This causes the soul to feel guilty; and severe remorse is the consequence. How happens this that the soul is punished for the sins of the body? Which is the greatest torment a sinner experiences, mental or bodily, in the spirit or the flesh? You cannot hesitate to mention the soul. On your ground this is altogether wrong; and if the soul now suffers because it has yielded to temptation and committed sin, what is to prevent its suffering in a future state for the same offences? Nothing. Perhaps indeed the flesh in many cases furnishes the *occasion*, but it is the soul *alone* that sins, by employing its moral powers in disobedience rather than in obedience. This every person must know from his own experience and observation; and none but those wedded to a system can have the effrontery to deny so palpable a truth. So that your system has no support from fact.

4. You ask whether it is not the cravings of appetite which induce the hungry man to steal food; whether it

is not a vitiated taste which leads a man to intemperance? These are doubtless inducements and nothing more, and on your theory nothing but the appetite and the taste ought to be punished; while you know that the soul is in both cases the real sufferer. The appetites or the cravings are not the sin. They might have been governed and resisted. Because they were indulged the offence was committed. The sin consisted in yielding to the temptation. The man of hunger and intemperance had the moral power to resist the calls of the appetites. On your ground I cannot see what in the world the soul has to do while here. It seems to be imprisoned to no purpose in the body. It merits no reward. It only remains to suffer exceedingly for yielding to temptations, and then it is to be pure and holy the moment it enters another world.

5. But you quote one or two passages of scripture in support of your position. "The dust shall return to the earth as it was and the spirit to God who gave it." For what purpose does the spirit return to God? To be happy in heaven? Nothing of the kind is mentioned. To be judged? Surely every one must give account of himself to God. If then the soul is sinful, must it not experience great remorse and torment? Are we not informed that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God? Does the child who has disobeyed his father delight in his presence or find happiness in his society? Does he not shun him and feel uneasy when under the inspection of his benignant eye? And can you believe that the spirit who has blasphemed the name of God, despised his counsels, disregarded his laws, neglected his worship, will find heaven in returning to his more immediate presence? Impossible. You also assure us that flesh and blood cannot inherit the *kingdom* of God. You make the phrase kingdom of

God refer to this world in all cases except those in which it will aid your cause to give it an opposite meaning. We are told that we shall have spiritual bodies like unto Christ's glorious body, but this will not change the moral character of our soul. Did not Christ have precisely the same moral character after his resurrection as before his crucifixion? Surely. How then can laying aside flesh and blood change our characters? I have dwelt longer on this argument so called than I intended. Of all theories ever broached I consider it one of the most irrational and unscriptural. I know not as any man of your party will now engage in its defence, and consequently I will pass it over as an exploded error both of heathen and christian writers.

XI. You draw an argument for the doctrine of no future retribution from our Savior's answer to the sadducees respecting the woman who had seven husbands. I perceive that those of your denomination who believe in no conscious state between death and the resurrection, place great dependence on this passage. The sadducees had no belief in a future existence. They watched our Savior so as to puzzle him with some difficult question. Read the following account. "Then came to him certain of the sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection, and asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, if any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren; and the first took a wife and died without children. And the second took her to wife and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she, for seven had her to wife? And Jesus answering, said unto them,

The children of this world marry and are given in marriage, but *they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world*, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God being the children of the resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him. *Then certain of the scribes answering, said, Master, thou hast well said. And after that they durst not ask him any question at all.*" Thus you have the whole narration. Luke 20. 29. Mark 12. 20. Mat. 22. 25.

Now you believe our Savior here taught, that all should be happy in the resurrection state. You feel authorized from the above conversation to declare, that you "now know of no condition for man beyond the grave, but that in which he is as the angels of God in heaven." You appeal then with great confidence to this passage of scripture in proof of your doctrine of no future retribution. I reject your exposition for many reasons, a few of which I will now mention.

1. In this passage our Savior has not taught the doctrine of no future retribution. He has not uttered a word or syllable which either affirms or implies that men are rewarded or punished precisely according to their deeds in this world. He has not intimated that the wicked shall experience no punishment beyond the grave, or the righteous shall receive no reward in another existence. Neither of these ideas are either stated, implied, or recognised in his words. This I think you will admit; and consequently the quotation has no connexion with the controversy.

2. The hearers of our Savior did not understand him to teach the doctrine of no future retribution in this passage. Suppose he was now on earth. Suppose some infidels, some unitarian ministers, and some orthodox preachers were assembled in his presence. Suppose the infidels should ask him the following questions. "Sir, a woman of our acquaintance has had seven husbands. You profess to teach a future existence which we deny. Can you tell us to which of the number the woman will belong in the next world?" Suppose he should return the following answer. "Men neither marry nor are given in marriage in another life. All are to be raised pure and holy. All will be happy like the angels in heaven." What would the orthodox divines say on hearing such sentiments? Would they utter the following exclamation? "Sir you have now spoken important truth." By no means. What would the infidels say to his remarks? Would they not exult that the orthodox doctrine of future punishment was denied and destroyed? Surely. And what would be the course of the unitarians? Would they not mention the answer of our Savior wherever they went, and proclaim the new doctrine with all zeal? This you must admit.

Now apply this illustration to our Savior and his hearers. Some sadducees who deny a future existence ask him the following question. "In the resurrection, whose wife of them shall she be, for seven had her to wife?" He answers in these words. "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Some of the jewish scribes were present who believed in future

retributions. What exclamation did they utter? Hear their own words. "Master, thou hast well said." Had they understood him to teach the doctrine of no future punishment could they have used this language? Could they have commended him for destroying at one blow an important article of their creed? No; no man in his senses will contend for this; consequently they could not have understood him to teach any thing inconsistent with their belief in relation to a future retribution. And what did the unbelieving sadducees say on this occasion? Did they exult in hearing the doctrine of their orthodox neighbors destroyed? No. They acted precisely as if the doctrines believed by the scribes, the doctrines of a future life and future retribution, had been confirmed. For we are informed that they dare not ask him any more questions. And what said the apostles who heard the whole conversation? When called to follow their master they believed in a future reward and punishments. Did they express any dissatisfaction with his answer? None at all. Did they ever mention this conversation in any of their subsequent preaching? We have no evidence of any such reference. Did they once intimate that their former faith on this subject had been destroyed? No. When preaching to those who believed in future rewards and punishments, did they allude to their belief on this point as if it was erroneous? Did they not confirm them in it by all their instructions and examples? Surely. It is then clear as the sun in the firmament that the hearers of our Savior did not understand him to teach the doctrine of no future punishment in this passage. And I really hope that your preachers will no longer quote this conversation in proof of their system, until they can remove this unanswerable objection to such an exposition.

3. Our Savior never designed to teach the doctrine of no future retribution in this passage. This is perfectly evident from the question proposed and the answer given. You perceive that the sadducee made no reference whatever either to rewards or punishments in a future existence. No allusion of this nature can be seen in his inquiry. Now had either of the husbands or the wife been ranked among the unrighteous, he would naturally have mentioned the circumstance. He could then have proposed a question of no small difficulty. He could have asked, to which of the righteous husbands the wicked wife would hereafter belong? And a solution of this inquiry would have settled forever the controversy in relation to a future retribution. But he had known the character of these seven brethren and the one wife, for he says they "were with us," as recorded in a parallel passage; and he intimates that they had obeyed the law of Moses even in the particular of marriage. This question then related to eight righteous individuals whom he had known, and its only design was to ascertain to which of the seven husbands the one wife would belong in another life. This only point our Savior kept in distinct view in his answer. He says that the children of this world marry, but when they enter the next existence they do not marry. Why? Because they can die no more, and consequently there is no need of marriage to fill the vacancies made by death. They are equal unto the angels. Equal in what? In knowledge and holiness and happiness? No, nothing of this nature is even hinted. No. They are *like* the angels in two things, in not marrying and in not dying; they are spiritual and immortal beings. They are the children of God. Why? Because they are the children of the resurrection; because they are alive again after death; for none but living souls are children

the blessing. Without your own consent and labor you cannot be a christian this side of eternity. If you can point out any way in which a man can be made holy without his own choice and exertions, then you will have more ground on which to stand. But since this is a moral impossibility, this class of texts neither asserts nor implies that there shall be no future retribution, and consequently is nothing to your purpose.

VII. You assert that Jesus is the Savior of the world, and you prove this by some quotations. You then infer that none will be hereafter rewarded and punished for the deeds done in the body. Your conclusion is drawn too hastily. This whole class of passages is the strongest possible proof against your doctrine. For you know that many leave this world whom Jesus has not saved. If he is to be their Savior, there must be some disciplinary process in the future life, and consequently the doctrine of future retribution is established. If they are saved by death, or the resurrection, or a miracle, then Jesus is not their Savior, and has no share in their salvation. If then all men are to be saved by Jesus there must be future rewards and punishments beyond the grave.

VIII. You assert that Jesus shall subdue every enemy, abolish death, destroy the devil and hell; and in proof of your assertion you refer to certain passages of scripture. You then infer that there will be no future retribution. This is most sophistical reasoning. When is Christ to subdue all enemies? In this life? Surely not. If then he has any hand in their conversion it must be after death; and if they need this reformation then, of course there must be future punishment. If they are made holy in any other process, then he has nothing to do in their subjugation. Consequently this

whole class of texts furnishes an unanswerable argument against your doctrine.

IX. You assert that he who is dead is freed from sin; and you take a passage from its connexion to prove this statement. You then infer that no one will be miserable after death. Your conclusion is lame, even if your premises were correct. For a man may be freed from sin and still suffer its consequences. Here is a person who has been a common drunkard for twenty years. He has now thoroughly reformed. He is free from the sin of intemperance; but is he free from its consequences, the loss of health, character, property, reputation, confidence, wasted time and privileges? Surely not. If then you could free a man from sin by death, its consequences might long remain to give him torment. But the text mentioned has no such meaning. Formerly it was appealed to with great confidence; now I do not know that even the most uneducated preacher in your connexion would quote it in proof of your system; so that there is ho occasion to give a formal exposition of the whole passage.

I have thus passed over very lightly the many proof texts to which reference is frequently made in support of the doctrine of universalism. You must see that not one of the number has the least possible connexion with the question at issue. Some of them have a direct bearing on the subject of the duration of future punishment; but this is a point with which I have nothing to do in my present work. I hope therefore no man will ever again quote a single passage from the whole number mentioned above, in proof of the doctrine of no future punishment; for I could not excuse one who should be guilty of such a measure from either gross ignorance or wilful dishonesty. I will now proceed to the three arguments on which great dependence is

is not a vitiated taste which leads a man to intemperance? These are doubtless inducements and nothing more, and on your theory nothing but the appetite and the taste ought to be punished; while you know that the soul is in both cases the real sufferer. The appetites or the cravings are not the sin. They might have been governed and resisted. Because they were indulged the offence was committed. The sin consisted in yielding to the temptation. The man of hunger and intemperance had the moral power to resist the calls of the appetites. On your ground I cannot see what in the world the soul has to do while here. It seems to be imprisoned to no purpose in the body. It merits no reward. It only remains to suffer exceedingly for yielding to temptations, and then it is to be pure and holy the moment it enters another world.

5. But you quote one or two passages of scripture in support of your position. "The dust shall return to the earth as it was and the spirit to God who gave it." For what purpose does the spirit return to God? To be happy in heaven? Nothing of the kind is mentioned. To be judged? Surely every one must give account of himself to God. If then the soul is sinful, must it not experience great remorse and torment? Are we not informed that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God? Does the child who has disobeyed his father delight in his presence or find happiness in his society? Does he not shun him and feel uneasy when under the inspection of his benignant eye? And can you believe that the spirit who has blasphemed the name of God, despised his counsels, disregarded his laws, neglected his worship, will find heaven in returning to his more immediate presence? Impossible. You also assure us that flesh and blood cannot inherit the *kingdom* of God. You make the phrase kingdom of

If so the soul is no agent and has no share in the process by which moral evil is produced. Now have you never learnt that sin consists in disobedience to the moral law of God, as well as to the physical laws which he has implanted in our constitution? Can the body or the flesh disobey this moral law? Surely not. Then obedience must be rendered by something else; and what is this something else, but the soul; the internal agent; the only agent; indeed all that constitutes the man a moral being? To say then that the body or flesh disobeys the moral law is a gross absurdity.

3. But you contend that sin is produced by temptations arising from the flesh. Suppose for the sake of argument I admit this. *How* is sin produced? Why, the soul yields to the temptations when they might have been resisted and should have been resisted. This the soul knows and feels. This constitutes the sin. This causes the soul to feel guilty; and severe remorse is the consequence. How happens this that the soul is punished for the sins of the body? Which is the greatest torment a sinner experiences, mental or bodily, in the spirit or the flesh? You cannot hesitate to mention the soul. On your ground this is altogether wrong; and if the soul now suffers because it has yielded to temptation and committed sin, what is to prevent its suffering in a future state for the same offences? Nothing. Perhaps indeed the flesh in many cases furnishes the *occasion*, but it is the soul *alone* that sins, by employing its moral powers in disobedience rather than in obedience. This every person must know from his own experience and observation; and none but those wedded to a system can have the effrontery to deny so palpable a truth. So that your system has no support from fact.

4. You ask whether it is not the cravings of appetite which induce the hungry man to steal food; whether it

is not a vitiated taste which leads a man to intemperance? These are doubtless inducements and nothing more, and on your theory nothing but the appetite and the taste ought to be punished; while you know that the soul is in both cases the real sufferer. The appetites or the cravings are not the sin. They might have been governed and resisted. Because they were indulged the offence was committed. The sin consisted in yielding to the temptation. The man of hunger and intemperance had the moral power to resist the calls of the appetites. On your ground I cannot see what in the world the soul has to do while here. It seems to be imprisoned to no purpose in the body. It merits no reward. It only remains to suffer exceedingly for yielding to temptations, and then it is to be pure and holy the moment it enters another world.

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God refer to this world in all cases except those in which it will aid your cause to give it an opposite meaning. We are told that we shall have spiritual bodies like unto Christ's glorious body, but this will not change the moral character of our soul. Did not Christ have precisely the same moral character after his resurrection as before his crucifixion? Surely. How then can laying aside flesh and blood change our characters? I have dwelt longer on this argument so called than I intended. Of all theories ever broached I consider it one of the most irrational and unscriptural. I know not as any man of your party will now engage in its defence, and consequently I will pass it over as an exploded error both of heathen and christian writers.

XI. You draw an argument for the doctrine of no future retribution from our Savior's answer to the sadducees respecting the woman who had seven husbands. I perceive that those of your denomination who believe in no conscious state between death and the resurrection, place great dependence on this passage. The sadducees had no belief in a future existence. They watched our Savior so as to puzzle him with some difficult question. Read the following account. "Then came to him certain of the sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection, and asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, if any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife; and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren; and the first took a wife and died without children. And the second took her to wife and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she, for seven had her to wife? And Jesus answering, said unto them,

creatures as to lead them into wickedness? Do not all free agents have to exert their moral power to withstand the allurements to iniquity? Does not the very essence of virtue consist in this rigid adherence to the path of rectitude. Now do you suppose our free agency is to be destroyed, or that we are to become perfect Gods? One or the other must be the case, or we can never be placed beyond the power of temptation and the need of exertion. Your definition of the word then is truly ridiculous. Now look at the connexion, lay aside your party biases, and you will find no difficulty in obtaining the true meaning of the passage. In this world our bodies decay and corrupt and perish; in the next existence we shall not have flesh and blood; we shall have a spiritual body which cannot decay and become corrupted. For we are to live forever; we are to be raised immortal; we must therefore have a spiritual body which can never see corruption. Those who remain on earth at the time of the last trump will not die. Their animal bodies will be changed to spiritual and incorruptible bodies; and then we may exultingly say, O grave where is thy victory? This you must perceive to be the true meaning of the word from the whole connexion. Every thing is so plain that I cannot possibly bring myself to offer further evidence in support of this exposition, except one passage of Paul from another epistle. These are his words. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." I think this must be decisive. The words incorruptible and immortal do not therefore have any reference whatever to the moral character on which happiness and misery must depend. They mean that

we shall have spiritual bodies which are adapted to a spiritual world, and which can never sink into corruption; and that in this condition we shall never die but live forever. All this we may possess and still be tormented in our minds with the most severe agony. How any of your writers could have appealed to this epistle in defence of your doctrine of no future retribution I cannot understand. The very texts they quote imply a sentiment directly the opposite. I need say no more to prove that you can produce nothing to your purpose from this chapter. 1 Cor. 15. 49, 53. Phil. 3. 21.

2. This chapter itself furnishes satisfactory evidence that Paul did not believe the doctrine of no future retribution. Take a very few passages for examination.

Read the following declaration. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Now this passage destroys at once your system. You contend that all men are rewarded and punished precisely according to their deeds in the present world. You believe that our future condition is not to be effected by our present character. Apply these sentiments to the assertion of the apostle. If he and his converts were the most miserable of men, then they must have been the most wicked. We know they were among the best of their period; consequently they were not rewarded according to their goodness and your belief in this particular is proved to be erroneous. What supported them under their great and unparalleled miseries? The hope of another existence in which they should receive the recompense of their labors; and of course the doctrine of future reward is plainly implied. The following paraphrase will express the meaning of the apostle. "Since we who are exposed daily to reproach, persecution, and sufferings of every kind, for the sake of Christ and his cause, have no hope of remu-

neration or relief but that which we derive from faith in Christ, and from the promises of the gospel; if these should fail us at last, if it should prove after all that Jesus is an impostor and his gospel a fable, we are then the most pitiable, the most unfortunate of mankind; because we have sacrificed our health, our peace, our character, our comfort, every thing which makes life worth enjoying, and in return we receive nothing but disappointment, disgrace and ruin." I think it must be evident to every candid mind that a believer in your system could never have written this sentence.

Take the following passages. "And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die. Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God." Here again you perceive a contradiction to your whole system. On your ground he should have put himself in danger every hour; for he would be rewarded in this life for his sacrifices. What advantage did he derive from his contests with the unchristian opposers? On your ground he received all the advantage he deserved. Suppose he should live again, is he hereafter to be benefited for his exposure, his contests, his sufferings? Not in the least according to your theory. And why does he exhort to righteousness and reformation? Would they make the converts any happier in this life? He had said their very profession and goodness exposed them to every affliction; and if these were to be of no advantage in another existence, how can you reconcile such advice with honesty? These sentences could never have been written by a believer in your doctrine of no future retribution. The following paraphrase will

aid you in obtaining the true meaning of the apostle. "If the gospel be true, and if there be a resurrection of the dead, the teachers of the christian religion are acting a wise and laudable part in proclaiming the doctrine of eternal life, and in exposing themselves to daily hazard for the sake of diffusing christian truth; for they are serving their fellow creatures in their most essential interests, and their labor shall not be finally in vain, even with regard to themselves. But if there be no resurrection of the dead, it would be the excess of folly to persist in an office of so great hazard and so little use. If during my whole stay at Ephesus, I have encountered the most savage treatment from wicked and interested men, who were ready to devour me like beasts of prey, this conflict as well as many others, I have endured with resolution and cheerfulness, animated by the hope of a recompense at the resurrection of the just. But upon the principles that some among you adopt, what have I to expect? It were better for us all, if there be no resurrection, and no future life, to renounce the christian religion which requires temperance, self-denial and self-government, and to adopt at once the licentious maxims of the Epicurean philosophy. As life is short, and we have nothing to expect hereafter, let us make the most of it while we live, and indulge ourselves without restraint in the gratifications of sense and appetite. Do not suffer yourselves to be imposed upon by this plausible and dangerous maxim, and do not associate with those who would inculcate such pernicious advice." You perceive that the argument applies with equal force against your doctrine as the one then believed by some that there would be no future life. The whole object of the apostle is to urge to perseverance in the christian cause, with the expectation of escaping future punishment, and receiving future

reward. So that a more direct attack upon your system need not be named. 1 Cor. 15. 30, 34.

Take one more specimen. The apostle concludes his whole argument in these words. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." If you can read through the whole chapter, and then say that this last verse does not teach the doctrine of future rewards, I will furnish satisfactory evidence of this position. The case is really so plain that I am ashamed to enter into a formal defence of its truth. As to this world you know their labor was worse than in vain; it exposed them to the greatest torments; it provoked such persecutions that they were the most miserable of mankind, consequently it must secure a future reward or it would be forever vain. I will quote no more passages at present. Now you must reconcile this chapter with all the other writings of the apostle. Have I not shown beyond all controversy that he taught future rewards and punishments? And would he contradict in this single chapter the whole tenor of his preaching and letters? Impossible. I must therefore conclude that this chapter furnishes in itself sufficient evidence to upset your whole system.

I have thus answered every argument that I thought could have the least influence with candid and intelligent readers. If there are others on which you place any reliance, let them be named, and I will immediately give them my attention. How feeble must be the foundation of a religious system which can furnish no better evidence of its truth; a system which is opposed to all sound philosophy, to the general current of revelation, to all the great facts of christianity; and which cannot produce one single passage from the whole bible

which either teaches its character or implies its correctness. Whether a little less boasting on the part of some of your writers, and a little less dogmatism, and a little less denunciation, and a little more modesty, and a little more candor, and a little more liberality, would not be becoming, I leave for you to decide.

LETTER XI.

My Dear Sir,

I will now state some of my objections to modern universalism. I shall express my honest convictions without the least reserve. You will remember that I am attacking a system of error and not the characters or motives of its defenders. You will therefore take no offence at the great plainness of speech which I must adopt.

I. Modern universalism is an *unscriptural* system. This is my firm belief. A few of the reasons which confirm this opinion may be briefly stated.

1. The scriptures do not teach the system of modern universalism. Can you mention a single passage, which contains the idea, that the righteous are always and equitably and fully rewarded by their righteousness in this world? Can you mention a single passage, which contains the idea, that the wicked are always and equitably and fully punished by their wickedness in the present existence? Can you mention a single passage, which contains the idea, that the righteous shall not be rewarded hereafter by the righteousness here acquired?

Can you mention one passage, which contains the idea, that the wicked shall not be punished hereafter by the wickedness here committed? Can you mention one passage, which contains the idea, that all mankind are to be made happy the first moment they enter upon the next conscious existence? Can you mention a passage which contains the idea, that all are to be on a perfect equality in the future life, and that their future condition will not be affected by the characters here formed? No. I have no hesitation in answering these questions in the negative. You cannot find one text in the whole bible which teaches your distinguishing sentiments. Is not your system unscriptural?

2. The scriptures teach doctrines in direct opposition to modern universalism. Have I not produced plain passages, which clearly prove that sin does not always punish the sinner sufficiently? Have I not produced plain passages, which clearly prove that corporal punishments were inflicted upon transgressors by divine authority? Have I not produced plain passages, which clearly prove that the wicked were not always punished according to their sinfulness, and that the righteous were not always rewarded according to their goodness? Have I not produced plain passages, which clearly prove that the righteous are hereafter to be rewarded for their conduct in this world, and that the wicked are to be hereafter punished for their earthly transgressions? Have I not mentioned many indisputable facts which cannot be reconciled with your peculiar views, without destroying the characters of Jesus and his apostles? Are not all these positions directly subversive of your theories? And do they not fully prove that your system is unscriptural.

3. The origin of modern universalism proves its unscriptural character. Two of your ministers have writ-

ten the ancient and modern histories of universalism. Their publications are wrongly named. They should have been called the ancient and modern histories of restorationism. All that relates to universalism might have been comprised in a small appendix. Now what accounts do they give us of your peculiar sentiments? Do they find them recorded in the writings of early or later christians? Do they trace them distinctly from the apostles to the present day? Nothing of the kind. They furnish no satisfactory evidence of their existence in the church until within a very recent period. They indeed make some assertions to the contrary. But have they found any thing in proof of their positions which is convincing to their own minds? Could I have produced no better testimony to show that the doctrine of a future retribution was embraced by the ancient disciples, would they not have sneered at my reasoning and ridiculed my conclusions? Now if our Savior and his apostles taught your system, I consider it a moral impossibility that it could have been so universally banished from the church. Some clear and indisputable traces of its introduction, corruption and banishment must have been discovered. Nor is this all. If the scriptures contain your distinguishing sentiments, would they not have been found by some of the many learned critics, candid inquirers after truth, impartial theologians who have lived since the apostolic age? I must affirm that these facts satisfy me of the unscriptural character of your doctrines.

4. The manner in which your system has been defended proves its unscriptural character. Sometimes it has rested on one foundation and sometimes on another of a directly opposite character. Sometimes it was said that the soul remained pure and could not suffer after its release from the body. Sometimes it was pretended that all sin originates in the flesh, is punished

in the flesh, and moulders to dust with the flesh. Sometimes it is argued that men have no immortal souls, that all sleep until the resurrection, and that we shall then be qualified for happiness by miracle. Sometimes one passage of scripture is adduced and sometimes another. Of late the whole stress of one party has been laid on our Savior's answer to the sadducees, and on the chapter of Paul in relation to the resurrection. And then the efforts made to destroy the meaning of those passages which teach or imply future retribution have been remarkable. Several different and even contradictory explanations have been given of the most important. Expositions have been published which outrage every principle of sound criticism and every dictate of common sense. Let me present you with a few specimens from those who rank among your first divines. Take the following from Luke. "And I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you fear him." Now read the universalist explanation. "And I say unto you, my friends, be not so much afraid of them, (the Jews) who have power only to scourge you in their synagogues, and to administer cruel tortures to your bodies, but have no authority to take your lives, as of that more extensive authority, (the Romans), to which your brethren the Jews will deliver you, by bringing you before governors and kings; for this power can, after inflicting cruelties on your bodies, doom your lives and bodies to be destroyed in *gehenna*." Take another example from the same author. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Here you have the meaning. "And as it is appointed *unto* men once to die, means, as it is appointed unto the

men who are high priests, to die once a year, by proxy, in their sacrifices; 'and after this the judgment,' means, after the high priest died in his sacrifice, he entered into the most holy place, bearing the judgment of the people, or the justification of the people." Take another explanation of the same passage. "What judgment comes after death? I answer the judgment God pronounced on all mankind; *dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.*" I could fill a volume with similar specimens. While reading the various criticisms of your writers, the words of the poet have been deeply impressed on my mind. "A little learning is a dangerous thing."

5. Modern universalism destroys the impartiality of our Father. Have I not proved that no perfect retribution takes place on earth? Have I not produced satisfactory evidence that all are not rewarded and punished according to their deeds? Have I not clearly shown that the wicked frequently escape deserved punishment, and the righteous receive undeserved infliction? Have I not shown that an inequality in the means of improvement and happiness, of rewards and punishments, exists in this world? Does not the bible assure us that God is the Father of all, that he is no respecter of persons, that he will render unto every man according to his deeds? Unless the inequalities of the present life are hereafter equalized you cannot preserve his impartiality. You must admit that he manifested partialism towards individuals and nations. And does not this destroy his strictly paternal character, and consequently render such a belief unscriptural?

6. Modern universalism makes our heavenly Father a cruel and vindictive being. Why does an earthly parent punish his disobedient child? To produce reformation and improvement. What is the design of the

divine punishment? Discipline and correction? Or revenge and torture? Look at yonder hardened wretch who has been suffering the painful consequences of his sins for twenty years. His torment has been gradually increasing with his wickedness. No reformation is yet produced. In all probability he will drop into the grave unreformed. Why has God tormented him so severely and for so long a period? To gratify his own resentment, or to produce repentance and holiness? If you say the former, then you make God a cruel tyrant; if you say the latter, then you must admit that the benevolent design has not yet been accomplished; and consequently he must continue to suffer until punishment produces its proper results. Now you may find hundreds and thousands whom punishment has not reformed; and if God is infinitely benevolent and perfectly just, their discipline must continue until it terminates in salvation. And since God is represented as a kind and merciful Father, does not your doctrine become unscriptural?

7. Modern universalism takes the work of the Savior out of his hands. He came to redeem men from their iniquities. He accomplishes this salvation by moral means. Many leave the world unreformed. If they enter upon heavenly happiness when they awake from the sleep of death, then Jesus has no share in their redemption. They are made holy either by passing through the grave, or by the resurrection, or by an immediate miracle; in either case the work is taken from the hands of him who was appointed to subdue every enemy to the universal Father. Does not such a supposition contradict the teachings of revelation, and thus become unscriptural?

8. Modern universalism makes the labors and sufferings and instructions of our Savior and his apostles of *no real* value. For what did they exert themselves?

To save a few Jews from the destruction of Jerusalem. For what did they expose themselves to the most severe persecutions? To save a remnant of the chosen people from temporal death. For what were their lessons of wisdom given? To rescue some of their brethren from a few moments of bodily pain. All of those who were destroyed in the calamity went to heaven. The few who were delivered and redeemed were exposed to afflictions and tortures more excruciating than temporal death. Yes; your mode of explaining the scriptures confines almost all their efforts to this paltry, insignificant purpose. And is not this an unscriptural interpretation?

9. Modern universalism destroys all of christianity which can be of serious interest to us of the present period. You limit all threatened punishment to the present world. On the same principles of interpretation, you must also limit all the promises of happiness to this life. There is no possible way in which you can honestly avoid this conclusion. I am glad to find some of your writers consistent. One has lately undertaken to show that those passages which teach the resurrection of the dead must be confined to the mortal existence; that the day of resurrection commenced at the destruction of Jerusalem; that all the descriptions which relate to this event in the epistles are to be thus applied. There can be no other honest course. Now in what passages is a future life declared? What is to be the future condition of mankind? What have we to do with the history of transactions which have long since transpired? What christianity remains for our use? How many passages will be left for our particular benefit? I do hope that you will endeavor to ascertain to what results your principles of interpretation must necessarily lead. I must consider a system unscriptural which confines christianity to a particular period and for a temporal *purpose.*

10. Modern universalism saps the foundation of christian morality. There is a right and a wrong in every thing. Jesus instructs us to adhere to the right in all cases, although our obedience should expose us to great self-denial, severe persecution, the most excruciating tortures, and even death itself. And why should this be done if this world has no connexion with another? On your ground, the rule of conduct must come to nothing more than atheistical morality. You are to take such courses as will insure the greatest degree of present happiness. This can frequently be obtained by deviations from the path of rectitude. Conscience must become nearly powerless when all fear of an hereafter is removed. And consequently the principle of expediency becomes the standard of duty. Is not this unchristian, and is not a system which necessarily leads to this result unscriptural?

I could mention many more reasons did my limits permit. These are sufficient to convince you that I have not taken up my present opinion without examination or evidence. If these arguments are sound, as I verily believe, they ought to awaken an alarm in your mind. You have no desire to uphold an unscriptural system. Then follow out the few hints I have mentioned; see if you can furnish a text from which to preach your distinguishing views; see if the passages I have quoted do not destroy your theories; see if you can find any distinct traces of your sentiments in the early ages of the church; look at the various defences which have been written; examine the history of Jesus and his apostles; ascertain if the character of your heavenly Father remains untouched, and decide for yourself, whether modern universalism is unscriptural, the invention of men, or whether it is the very gospel which Jesus taught and in proof of which he laid down his *precious life.*

II. Modern universalism is an *irrational* system. I shall attempt to prove, that it is not the dictate of reason, that it does not coincide with the decisions of reason, that it is opposed to the soundest conclusions of reason. A few of the arguments which confirm this opinion I will briefly state.

1. Modern universalism is not the dictate of reason. Look at the great company of reasonable beings whose history is known. Has their reason declared that a perfect retribution took place on earth? Has their reason discovered that men will be neither rewarded nor punished beyond the grave for the deeds done in the body? Has their reason adopted the conclusion that all mankind will be happy the moment they enter upon the next conscious existence? Has their reason taught that all will be upon an equality in the heavenly world? No. You will admit that no such views have generally prevailed in any age, in any nation, in any religion; and consequently your system is proved irrational.

2. Human reason has taught doctrines directly contrary to modern universalism. It has proclaimed that a perfect retribution does not take place on earth. It has concluded that men must be rewarded and punished hereafter for the deeds done in the body. It has determined that distinctions must hereafter be made according to moral goodness. Are not all these views opposed to your theories? And have not the great majority in all times and places and churches adopted these deductions of reason? This you will admit, and consequently your system is proved irrational. My four next reasons are taken from a late volume of discourses by Dr. Channing. Since the ideas are expressed with so much more beauty and power than I could possibly give them, no apology is needed for borrowing his language.

3. "It is maintained by some among us, that punish-

ment is confined to the present state; that in changing worlds we shall change our characters; that moral evil is to be buried with the body in the grave. As this opinion is spread industriously, and as it tends to diminish the dread of sin, it deserves some notice. To my mind a more *irrational* doctrine was never broached. In the first place, it contradicts all our experience of the nature and laws of mind. There is nothing more striking in the mind, than the connexion of its successive states. Our present knowledge, thoughts, feelings, characters, are the results of former impressions, passions, and pursuits. We are at this moment what the past has made us; and to suppose, that, at death, the influences of our whole past course are to cease on our minds, and that a character is to spring up at war with what has preceded it, is to suppose the most important law or principle of the mind to be violated, is to destroy all analogy between the present and the future, and to substitute for experience the wildest dreams of fancy. In truth, such a sudden revolution in the character, as is here supposed, seems to destroy a man's identity. The individual thus transformed, can hardly seem to himself or to others the same being. It is equivalent to the creation of a new soul."

4. "Let me next ask, what fact can be adduced in proof or illustration of the power ascribed to death, of changing and purifying the mind? What is death? It is the dissolution of certain limbs and organs by which the soul now acts. But these, however closely connected with the mind, are entirely distinct from its powers, from thought and will, from conscience and affection. Why should the last grow pure from the dissolution of the first? Why shall the mind put on a new character, by laying aside the gross instruments through which it now *operates*? At death, the hands, the feet, the eye, and

the ear perish. But they often perish during life; and does character change with them? It is true that our animal appetites are weakened and sometimes destroyed by the decay of the bodily organs on which they depend. But our deeper principles of action, and the moral complexion of the mind, are not therefore reversed. It often happens, that the sensualist, broken down by disease, which excess has induced, comes to loathe the luxuries to which he was once enslaved; but do his selfishness, his low habits of thought, his insensibility to God, decline and perish with his animal desires? Lop off the criminal's hands, does the disposition to do mischief vanish with them? When the feet mortify, do we see a corresponding mortification of the will to go astray? The loss of sight or hearing is a partial death; but is a single vice plucked from the mind, or one of its strong passions palsied, by this destruction of its chief corporeal instruments?"

5. "Again; the idea that by dying, or changing worlds, a man may be made better or virtuous, shows an ignorance of the nature of moral goodness or virtue. This belongs to free beings; it supposes moral liberty. A man cannot be made virtuous, as an instrument may be put in tune, by a foreign hand, by an outward force. Virtue is that to which the man himself contributes. It is the fruit of exertion. It supposes conquest of temptation. It cannot be given from abroad to one who has wasted life, or steeped himself in crime. To suppose moral goodness breathed from abroad into the guilty mind, just as health may be imparted to a sick body, is to overlook the distinction between corporeal and intellectual natures, and to degrade a free being into a machine."

6. "I will only add, that to suppose no connexion to exist between the present and the future character,

is to take away the use of the present state. Why are we placed in a state of discipline, exposed to temptation, encompassed with suffering, if without discipline, and by a soverign act of omnipotence, we are all of us, be our present characters what they may, soon and suddenly to be made perfect in virtue, and perfect in happiness?"

"Let us not listen for a moment to a doctrine so irrational, as that our present characters do not follow us into a future world. If we are to live again, let us settle it as a sure fact, that we shall carry with us our present minds, such as we now make them; that we shall reap good or ill according to their improvement or corruption; and, of consequence, that every act, which affects character will reach in its influences beyond the grave, and have a bearing on our future weal or wo. We are now framing our future lot. He who does a bad deed says, more strongly than words can utter, 'I cast away a portion of future good, I resolve on future pain!'"

7. I regard modern universalism as a cruel doctrine. Here is a christian wife. She has had five children. They lived to the age of youth, and excited the strongest hopes of their friends. One after another was taken in the very bloom of innocence. All have departed. In the mean time the health of their mother was originally feeble. She has been gradually sinking. For many years she has not known a well day. Hours and hours she has suffered the most excruciating pains. She still lingers in a state of extreme debility and suffering. Now you visit her with your system. You make a direct application to her case in these words. "Madam, I bring you the consolations of the gospel. Your Father is an impartial being. He rewards and punishes in this life exactly according to the deeds done in the body.

You appear to have been long and greatly miserable. Of course you must be ranked among the most depraved. Though your sins have been concealed from the eyes of the world, there is doubtless great pollution within. I would therefore exhort you to repent, to forsake your evil ways, and thus secure temporal happiness." Should you call this the message of kindness or of cruelty? It sounds to me very much like the language of Job's comforters whom the Lord considered guilty of falsehood. If you are consistent with your views I know not how you can help giving such instructions in all cases of great affliction. And is not this grossly irrational?

8. Modern universalism makes condition the criterion of character. Every sinner is punished exactly according to his wickedness. Here is a man in great prosperity. His riches have increased. His children improve faithfully their great advantages for education. His mind is not disturbed by anxiety or remorse or pain. He is always cheerful, always happy. You speak to him the sentiments of your system. "Sir, I rejoice in your acquaintance. I must pronounce you the best christian I ever knew. The Lord has shown you special favors on account of your superior holiness. You experience no misery. Happiness dwells in your bosom from day to day without intermission. Persevere in the way you have begun and the blessing of heaven shall attend you to the grave." You call upon his next neighbor, a poor, sorrow-stricken, disconsolate widow. You ask if her rich neighbor is not one of the most perfect of mortals. You learn that he is regarded by those who know him best, a dishonest, unprincipled, unbelieving, libertine. You hear of his acts of fraud, violence, cruelty, seduction, which make you shudder at the recital. You learn that he has no belief in God

or futurity, no fear of hell or expectation of heaven, no conscience and no rule of duty but sheer selfishness. You find that he is one of the exceptions to common rules. His peculiar constitutional temperament, his almost perfect health, his thorough unbelief, his temporal prosperity, all conspire to produce this tranquillity and apparent enjoyment. Is it rational then to determine a man's character by his outward or inward condition?

Such are a few of the reasons for my belief. I hope you will give them a candid consideration. I commend to your special notice the extracts with which I have enriched my pages. If any fair answer can be given to these arguments I know it not; but I am ready to listen to manly discussion and sound reasoning.

III. The *tendency* of modern universalism is *pernicious*. You will not of course expect me to speak of its actual influence on those who have embraced the system. This would be foreign from my present object and on many accounts improper. The scheme as it now exists is of very recent origin. It is not received by religious societies in any other country. In our own land it is united with views of a redeeming character. Many preachers who are supposed to believe in its truth seldom or never proclaim it with distinctness and boldness. Many persons who are ranked in the denomination have no definite notions on the subject, and many are decided restorationists. The number of those who have made a public profession of religion is very small in comparison with the whole body. A portion of these hold to future rewards and punishments. Probably not more than five hundred in the United States who avow their firm belief in the peculiar doctrines of the party belong to the church. Most of these had formed christian characters under other influences, opinions and preach-

ing. They doubtless exhibit as correct morals as the same number in other denominations. It would not be candid to express any opinion of those who do not profess to be believers in christianity. I have indeed been informed by some who have been preachers in the connexion that the influence of the system is actually pernicious, and that unbiased and disinterested witnesses must arrive at this conclusion from personal observation. It is my intention to mention a few of the reasons which convince me that the *natural tendency* of the system is pernicious, rather than to describe its *actual influence*. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to enable any one to speak with perfect confidence in relation to the last particular. You will therefore allow me the same liberty that you take yourself in relation to calvinism.

1. Does not modern universalism naturally tend to open infidelity? So it appears to my mind. And I am confirmed in this opinion by some existing facts. Have not several of your preachers publicly renounced christianity? Is not one of the oldest and ablest of the number now editing an atheistical publication, and lecturing to a society of unbelievers? Has he not been permitted to deliver his philippics against all natural and revealed religion in several universalist churches? And have not the papers of the denomination remained silent on the subject? Have not several who were formerly among your most active agents arrayed themselves in opposition to the gospel? Have any of your clergy attempted to stay the progress of infidelity by their writings? One indeed aimed to expose the principles of the free inquirers. He was soon accused by them of having been one of their number. The evidence presented by them in support of the charge, and his own confession after an unsuccessful vindication, have left little or no doubt on the minds of candid readers as to

his former condition. Still no investigation is attempted. Others are declared to be in the same predicament. Some who have left your sect for the societies of the skeptics declare that the principles of reasoning and interpretation you adopt lead directly to the rejection of all revelation. They also affirm that no small number who remain in your enclosure have no firm belief in the divine origin of christianity. I have no wish to enlarge on this topic. These facts are before the public and in the mouths of the community. And what conclusion will people adopt from the existing circumstances? Perhaps you can answer this question better if I should make a supposition. Well, suppose then that one of our oldest and ablest ministers should establish an atheistical paper in the metropolis, attack all religion with ridicule and sophistry, lecture weekly either in the city or in some unitarian churches in the vicinity on his infidel principles. Suppose that others, ministers and hearers, should follow his example in some degree, and do all in their power for the overthrow of every thing most precious to mortal man. Suppose that no one of our denomination should raise a finger to convince the apostates of their errors or to confirm the remaining in the truth. What conclusion should you draw from such startling facts? Now your belief in revelation is unwavering. You have no more sympathy with the unbelieving than I have. And because some of your party have avowed their infidelity, and others of the same views remain among you, it is no sufficient reason for renouncing your system. But it is a sufficient reason to induce you to investigate anew the foundations of your faith, to examine the reasoning by which it is defended, to try the principles of interpretation by which you escape from the obvious meaning of the Savior and apostles.

And this is what I hope you will be induced to perform; and that your preachers who have sufficient leisure to write controversial books will find time to do something for the defence of christianity.

2. Does not modern universalism tend to destroy the christian ordinances? You have many societies formed in different parts of the union. Perhaps there are fifty or sixty in Maine. I am informed that scarcely half a dozen churches have been gathered in the state. Similar remarks might be made in relation to other places. Even where the ordinance of the supper is celebrated the number of communicants is generally very small. A friend of mine once remained to the communion in the church where your oldest and ablest divine officiates, and he found but thirteen present. I suppose the whole number who have made an open profession in your societies, including the believers in restoration, is less than two thousand. This is a point easily settled. Give the exact numbers in each place and the controversy in question is at an end. Mere denial of my statement will not produce conviction. Now if your communion table was hedged up with creeds there would be some good excuse for this deficiency. I am not so superstitious as to suppose there is more real goodness in a person simply because he partakes of the consecrated elements. But I regard the subject in this light. If a man has a firm belief in the gospel; if he loves the Lord Jesus in sincerity; if he wishes to form a christian character; if he desires to improve all the means of grace within his reach, he will generally feel disposed to comply with the request of his ascended Master; he will be unwilling to neglect this act of gratitude and this opportunity of personal advancement in holiness. Though there may be as good christians out of the church as within her enclosures, yet the observance of

this rite is now considered an evidence of a person's interest in the gospel of Jesus. Does not this prevailing neglect of the ordinances seem to indicate that too many take up your system as a matter of speculation, and not as an inducement to greater progress in religious goodness?

3. Does not modern universalism tend to the destruction of gospel preaching? How many societies have been formed in your order within the last twenty years? The number is large. How many of them are now in existence; how many of them in a flourishing condition; and how many that support a stated ministry? I cannot give an accurate answer to these questions. By looking over files of your papers, and your modern history of universalism, and comparing the statements there found with existing facts I am led to the following conclusions. Many societies have dwindled into insignificance. Many more have a name to live but are virtually dead. Many have but a few sabbaths' preaching in the course of the year. Some have sold their churches. Some are in a more prosperous condition. A change of ministers is almost constantly taking place. There are some exceptions to these statements. Then the character of your preaching generally. Is it in accordance with the commission given by our Savior to his apostles. Is it the grand object of your ministers to make their hearers practical christians; to make them love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves? Or do they spend much time in ridiculing and condemning other denominations; in defending the peculiar dogmas of your creed, and in explaining away those passages which seem to teach a contrary doctrine? I leave these questions for each one to answer for himself. I am no enemy to doctrinal or controversial preaching at proper times. But I conceive that we

have accomplished no very valuable object until we have induced our hearers to live sober, righteous and godly lives. And I have come to the conclusion from the facts which have come to my knowledge, that many of the members in your societies take no deep interest in correct practical preaching.

4. Does not modern universalism tend to sectarianism? If unitarians, residing in orthodox parishes, were admitted to the christian ordinances, and not publicly condemned for their honest convictions, I should consider it a sectarian proceeding for any minister of our denomination to interfere in their behalf, and encourage them to form a separate society. But if they were excluded from the baptismal font and the table of the communion; if they were denied the christian name and sentenced to future misery, for their sincere belief, I should feel it my duty to aid them in the maintenance of their religious rights. And any thing I could do for their prosperity I should not regard as sectarian. You ought to pursue a similar course. Now if a minister of your sect should go to an individual in a unitarian parish in which all was peace and harmony, where the believer in your doctrine was denied no privilege, no right, no hope, where he retained his christian name and standing and influence, and urge him to furnish a hall for preaching, to collect all he could gather into a new ecclesiastical body, I should call this thoroughly sectarian. That such a course has been pursued, that another preacher declared he should go into every place in which he could get hearers, and do all in his power to make proselytes to his system, I do know. And that several of the party have shown no great delicacy in obtruding their services into the parishes of their brethren I suppose no one will deny. Now I am not condemning any christian measures for the spread of what

is believed to be truth. But it is repeatedly said in my hearing, that universalists manifest as much sectarian zeal as the orthodox, as much bigotry and narrowmindedness, as much denunciation and disorganizing disposition, without the strong motive arising from the calvinistic creed. Whether this is literally the fact or not I leave others to determine. I indeed feel engaged in the promotion of unitarianism. Why? Because I think it is the pure truth of the gospel and will make more and better christians. I had rather be instrumental in making one pious disciple than five hundred nominal unitarians. Now is it the principal object in all the exertions of your preachers to make men truly good; rather than to build up a party?

5. Does not modern universalism tend to the destruction of civil government? You believe that sin itself punishes the sinner sufficiently. If so all human inflictions are undeserved and unjust. Take the highway robber. He is imprisoned for life. This is a most severe punishment. If his crime produces sufficient torment then all this is unrighteous. If then you are sincere in your opinion you must protest against all human interference in cases of wickedness. You must affirm that every criminal is justly and adequately recompensed by his deeds of iniquity. You must labor for the abolition of all civil laws. Yes. If I honestly believed your system I would discover consistency in my conduct. I wish to remove all possible evils. If God or the sin itself always punishes the transgressor according to his guilt, then surely there is no greater curse than civil governments. I should therefore labor day and night to abolish all human penalties. Could I be instrumental in effecting such an object what would be the consequences? Go into society tomorrow. *Proclaim* that all men are rewarded and punished pre-

cisely according to their deeds. Scatter all written laws to the four quarters of heaven. Assure every man that he may do as he pleases, the consequences of his own conduct will be upon his head. And what would follow? Anarchy, confusion, murder, every evil work. Are you not bound then by your very belief to begin the destruction of all penal enactments, or acknowledge that your views are not capable of being reduced to practice without destroying society?

6. Does not modern universalism seem to offer a bounty on wickedness? Here are twin brothers. One labors hard and unremittingly in the formation of a christian character. He attains to great moral excellence. The other gives himself to dissipation. He becomes thoroughly abandoned. At fifty both die. The christian has already prepared himself for heaven. He is admitted. The other is made over by miracle and placed upon an equality with his brother. Is not this holding out an encouragement to irreligion and sinfulness? Here are two young men without any decided moral principle, like many that we find in the world. One is an atheist, and the other a universalist. They are governed by the same motives which operate more or less in all hearts of the same description. The atheist asks himself what course of conduct he shall pursue. The following train of thoughts passes through his mind. "Here I am upon this earth. How I came here I have no knowledge. They say there is a God in heaven. I have no belief in any supreme Being. I have no hope of another life after death. This world is all I can call my own. Now I have seen enough of mankind to know that most happiness is secured by doing about what is right. I will therefore avoid all those vices which can give me any serious torment. I will remain on the sure side of the question." The universalist adopts the

following views. "I am placed in this world for happiness. I know that sin produces some misery, how much I know not from experience. I must live again after death. I must be happy in heaven. This I cannot help. This is not left to my choice. My God will make me good and happy at any rate. I will therefore indulge myself in the pleasures of earth. I will enter those paths which ministers forbid. I am strongly tempted to such courses by my appetites and passions. I do not believe the punishment will be half so great as the enjoyment. On the whole I shall be a gainer. But if at any time I find myself involved in distress, and I do not see a fair prospect of securing more comfort than sorrow, I will release myself from all earthly suffering. I will escape from human justice to heavenly glory." I ask if these are not natural suppositions? Does not your system hold out a bounty to wickedness and irreligion?

7. Does not modern universalism tend to suicide? Here is a mechanic. He maintains a fair reputation. He has a promising family. He is tempted to steal from his employer. He thinks the theft may be kept an everlasting secret. He yields and takes the tempting money. At length discovery is made. He is to be dismissed from his occupation. His family and friends will feel disgraced. His good name will be destroyed. Confidence in his honesty cannot soon be restored. Shall he submit to all this punishment? Or shall he by an easy death avoid all misery and enter heaven? If he acts in accordance with the motives which generally regulate human conduct he will surely depart. Now look into the world. How many do you see who are placed in even a worse predicament? How many who have no prospect before them but suffering, or ignominy, or punishment? Is it not the dictate of sound wisdom to shun the evil and seek the good? I cannot

answer for others, but for myself, I am willing to state my deliberate conviction. If I should ever be placed in such circumstances, and had as firm a belief in your doctrine as I have in the opposite, I should not hesitate one moment. I have no fear of death whatever. And I should be most foolish not to escape from weeks of misery to perfect and endless happiness when the simple act of releasing myself from earth would not cost me so much pain as I experience every hour. Nor is this all. I think I have some benevolent feeling. I wish to see every one enjoying happiness. It gives me anguish to witness mental or bodily suffering. I frequently meet with individuals whom I believe must have great torment during their earthly existence. If I had a firm belief in your doctrine, I could not help advising such to suicide. I should be bound to this course by my very benevolence, by my great desire to relieve them from suffering. I see not how I could do otherwise, and act like a wise and good and benevolent christian. Now I believe wilful suicide is a crime, and that we have no right to desert the post in which our Maker has placed us; and for desertion I believe we shall have to render a solemn account. I wish you to look at this point candidly. I certainly think I have done so. And if I know my own heart, I should act and advise as I have mentioned, provided my belief in your doctrine was as strong as in the opposite truth.

8. Does not modern universalism greatly tend to discourage exertions for mental and moral improvement? Some of your older preachers have ridiculed the necessity of human learning for the ministry. But few of the order have thought it necessary to make any great preparation for the office. Men are taken from some mechanical employment, and in a few weeks ushered into the pulpit. Some exertions have lately been made to

establish a literary institution for your order in Maine, and funds have been solicited in this vicinity, but without any signal success. And if the cultivation which the mind now receives is to be of no service hereafter, the motive to exertion is surely diminished. The same may be said of moral goodness. How often have some of your party sneered at the idea of our present attainments having any bearing on our future condition. Efforts have been made to convince people that the difference between men in real goodness is very small. Prayers and other means of spiritual advancement have been slightingly mentioned. And all this I know is consistent with your creed. But the question is this. Would not a belief that our mental and moral attainments are to be carried with us to the future life increase our exertions in educating ourselves and others? Certainly; you will not deny so plain a conclusion. Then your system must naturally tend to diminish exertions in behalf of learning and holiness.

Thus, my dear sir, I have thrown out a few hints on an important subject. I could enumerate many more objections to modern universalism if my limits permitted. These are however of a serious character and if well sustained ought to lead you to reflection and examination. How they can be fairly answered I know not. Can the community then be expected to encourage such views if they desire pure and rational religion to prevail?

LETTER XII.

My Dear Sir,.

My discussion is finished. My correspondence will now be closed with a few general observations. You are well aware that different views of divine punishment are advocated by the different denominations. Which view is best adapted to prevent sin and encourage holiness? To this question I will return a brief and explicit answer.

The universalist view of the divine punishment is this. Men are punished for their sins in this world and no where else. On minds truly christian this sentiment may produce no injurious effects. But look into the world. Are all practical believers? Are all really virtuous and pious? Are not a large portion of children and youth destitute of holiness? Are they not governed by principles of expediency? Preach to them your doctrine. Tell them plainly that they will be punished for every sin they commit in some form or other. Assure them that they will be sure of heaven the moment they enter upon the next conscious existence, let them do what they may on earth. And what influence will

such preaching produce? Many cannot make themselves believe what they hear. They fear something hereafter. The sense of accountableness to an omniscient judge interposes to save them from the temptation to iniquity. Others will think that the punishment for many vices is trifling. They are willing to risk the consequences. They do not become very abandoned. They live that loose, careless, indifferent sort of life which is a great enemy to genuine holiness. So that upon the whole I regard the influence of this view of divine punishment as decidedly injurious. I have no doubt on the question. All the reasoning in creation cannot convince me to the contrary. I have been young. I have mingled freely with various classes of society. And I *know* that the fear of future punishment has deterred many a youth from entering upon the downward road to destruction.

The calvinistic view of divine punishment is this. It allows as much temporal punishment as the universalist. The believer in this doctrine indeed uses different words to express his ideas. He believes it is neither equitably administered nor sufficient in degree. He believes that the elect will not hereafter suffer for their present sinfulness. He believes the non-elect will be exposed to excruciating and endless torments. The tendency of this view is decidedly injurious. To the person who considers himself of the number of the elect its influence is precisely the same as universalism; and a very large portion endeavor to shelter themselves under this covenant. Others believe that God can and doubtless will change their hearts either before death or at the moment of dissolution, and with such the effect is nothing more than universalism. Others again regard such threatenings as unreasonable. They deem it impossible for God to inflict severe and endless torments upon a child

for what sin he can commit in this short life. He however forms no definite notions on the subject of future retribution, and might as well believe in universalism. Another class are driven by this doctrine to skepticism and infidelity. They cannot reconcile it with the character of a good Father. They are assured that it is taught in the scriptures. They renounce their belief in revelation. Hundreds in our land may be found to answer this description. The last class are sincere believers in the view mentioned; and are driven by it to despair and in some cases to insanity. I have spoken plainly, but, as I firmly believe, the words of truth and soberness.

The rational and scriptural view is this. God is a perfect Father. He made us for happiness. He loves us all with an infinite affection. He gives us free agency. When we disobey the laws of our nature we are punished; when we observe his precepts we are rewarded. Every thing bad in our thoughts, words, deeds, has a bearing upon our future destiny. We cannot escape from the consequences of sin for a long period even if we reform. If we do not repent the work becomes every day more difficult. As we leave this world we enter upon the next existence. God is still a Father. Jesus is still a Savior. The angels are filled with love. Man is still a free agent. He cannot be happy without holiness. He cannot become holy without his own consent and most strenuous exertions. The principles of the divine government remain unaltered. Punishment must attend or follow sinfulness. No blame rests upon any but the free moral agent who has made himself wretched, and who must remain in torment until reformation ensues. When that time will arrive God only knows. This I believe to be the rational and scriptural view; and this I believe to be of the best possible

moral tendency. For the character of our Father, the free agency of man, and the doctrine of a perfect and impartial retribution are preserved.

Thus have I given you a mere outline of the argument for a future righteous retribution. I could have extended my reasoning and proofs to an indefinite length. If however you are not convinced of the truth of my positions by the evidence presented, I have no expectation that you will ever be converted to my opinions by any rational or scriptural arguments.

I have confined my remarks to one point. I have advanced no evidence but such as appeared to me to be intelligible to the simplest understanding, and to have a direct bearing on the controversy. I have quoted many passages of scripture, and more texts are already selected and approved by the highest authority in our country. I have endeavored to answer every important objection to my views which your writers have stated; and to refute the arguments by which they have defended your system. If any objection or argument of weight has been omitted I shall feel great regret.

I have avoided personalities except in a few instances. I trust you have found no unkind or unchristian language. I have indeed spoken my mind with great plainness and freedom. I have given free and full utterance to my feelings respecting your distinguishing sentiments. This you will not condemn or dislike. I have not impugned the motives or slandered the characters or outraged the feelings of your members. I have alluded to the conduct of individuals, and expressed my opinion of the qualifications of some of your critics for the important work of exposition. I think I have not done unto others differently from what I should be willing others should do unto me in return. I think you can have no cause of complaint on the score of uncharitableness.

I have endeavored to avoid all appearance of display in learning. In reading the writings of some of your ministers I have experienced no small share of disgust. I have seen criticisms upon greek words by those who evidently have no knowledge of the language. I think some have been guilty of this who could not read a page of classical greek to save their lives. Now I do not blame a man for being ignorant of the ancient languages, because this may be unavoidable. But to impose upon the ignorant, simply because you can tell the letters of the alphabet, or have a mere smattering of this kind of knowledge, is truly censurable. I do feel that I am deserving of some credit for not exposing fully the ignorance and pedantry of some of your authors.

I hope you will read what I have written with candor and decide for yourself concerning its merits. And if you are disposed to return an answer to these letters, I hope you will pursue a fair and christian course. You recollect the answer of the orthodox to my letters on religious liberty. You then pronounced that production sophistical, evasive, unfair, ungentlemanly and altogether inconclusive. I know you will shun the peculiar faults of that review. You will however permit me to remind you of several particulars to be avoided.

I hope you will not charge me with misrepresentation. I have given a definite statement of the sentiments which I meant to attack. I have quoted from your writers some passages to show that others hold the same views with yourself. If you do not *now* believe those opinions, you will not accuse me of misrepresenting the belief of universalists. Perhaps you may deny the inferences I have made in certain cases. If so show me the way in which they can be avoided.

I hope you will not charge me with contradicting myself. This is a very common mode of attack when

all fair arguments fail. The infidels pursue this course in relation to the bible. I lately read one of their pamphlets called the scripturian's creed. Passages are taken from their connexion and when placed beside each other have an appearance of discrepancy. Examine the context and all difficulty vanishes. I cannot give the compiler of the work credit for common honesty, nor the person who should be led to reject the truth of the gospel from its perusal credit for common sense. Now it would be no difficult matter to take sentences from their connexion and make it appear at first sight that I had contradicted myself in a few instances. But on looking to the context and receiving a few words of explanation from other parts of the work, I trust all will appear consistent. I think you will not be guilty of this mean subterfuge so often adopted by those who are defeated.

I hope you will remember what kind of an answer to the present publication will be necessary to satisfy candid readers before you undertake the work. I have presented a large number of arguments and very many passages of scripture in proof of my positions. Now you may refute one or a dozen arguments; you may explain away one or a dozen passages of scripture, and still you have accomplished nothing to your purpose. You must refute every argument; you must destroy the obvious meaning of every passage of scripture, before your work will be accomplished. I trust you will not be guilty of the meanness of taking one or more of the weakest arguments, and one or more of the less conclusive texts, and holding them up before your readers as fair specimens of the whole work. I have known this done by those whom you pronounced unfair and dishonorable.

I hope you will meet every question and proof in a

fair and open manner. Sometimes I have noticed a good deal of mystification in the writings of some of your order. When they could not answer an objection or argument, they would talk about the subject, raise a great cloud of words before the eyes of their readers; evade the real point at issue, and cry victory. It is too late in the day for success to attend such measures. If you would hope to secure the attention of candid and honest inquirers after truth, you must meet the question fairly: you must furnish a conclusive answer to the argument. Or you must acknowledge that you know of no way in which the position can be overthrown. I trust therefore that you will not stoop to the degrading business of mystifying the subject in debate.

I hope you will avoid the infidel mode of attack. You have seen in what manner one of your former preachers assails all natural and revealed religion. He cannot answer the arguments by which they are supported, and so he resorts to sneers, ridicule, assertions, objections. Now there is no subject however sacred or well attested but may be ridiculed. You may say something against every truth in existence. You may make round and strong declarations. But with sensible men all such attacks have little weight. They are generally the indications of a feeble mind or a weak cause. And none but superficial reasoners, and blinded partisans, and willing slaves, can be satisfied with an answer of this description.

I hope you will avoid personalities and blackguard and dishonesty. I ought to apologize for expressing such a hope. I have no good reason to expect any thing of the kind from your pen. But I have seen so much of this in one or two of your writers that I could not omit the caution. You may wish to know if I shall reply to any answers that may be made to my publica-

tion. Any thing like fair argument, manly discussion, sound criticism, I hold myself bound to notice in some form or other. Offensive personalities, attacks upon character, low scurrility, overbearing sophistry, disgusting blackguardism, vulgar billingsgate, I have no disposition to answer; but if it should become necessary in the cause of truth and honesty to hurl such dirty missiles back, you may depend that I shall not shrink from the contest while life and health remain. I am acquainted with too many facts in relation to your denomination to fear the results of such miserable warfare. I have not entered upon this controversy without first counting the cost. I firmly believe that I am engaged in the defence of everlasting and infinitely important truth; and I shall not be driven to desert the post of duty by any unchristian measures of my opponents. As an appropriate conclusion to my work I present you the following extract from the late volume of Dr. Channing.

"I proceed now to an important and solemn remark, in illustration of the evil of sin. It is plainly implied in Scripture, that we shall suffer much more from sin, evil tempers, irreligion, in the future world, than we suffer here. This is one main distinction between the two states. In the present world, sin does indeed bring with it many pains, but not full or exact retribution, and sometimes it seems crowned with prosperity; and the cause of this is obvious. The present world is a state for the formation of character. It is meant to be a state of trial, where we are to act freely, to have opportunities of wrong as well as right action, and to become virtuous amidst temptation. Now such a purpose requires, that sin, or wrongdoing, should not regularly and infallibly produce its full and immediate punishment. For suppose, my hearers, that at the very instant of a bad purpose or a bad deed, a sore and awful penalty were unfailingly to light upon

you; would this be consistent with trial? would you have moral freedom? would you not live under compulsion? Who would do wrong, if judgment were to come like lightning after every evil deed? In such a world, fear would suspend our liberty and supersede conscience. Accordingly sin, though, as we have seen, it produces great misery, is still left to compass many of its objects, often to prosper, often to be gain. Vice, bad as it is, has often many pleasures in its train. The worst men partake, equally with the good, the light of the sun, the rain, the harvest, the accommodations and improvements of civilized life, and sometimes accumulate more largely outward goods. And thus sin has its pleasures, and escapes many of its natural and proper fruits. We live in a world where, if we please, we may forget ourselves, may delude ourselves, may intoxicate our minds with false hopes, and may find for a time a deceitful joy in an evil course. In this respect the future will differ from the present world. After death, character will produce its full effect. According to the Scriptures, the color of our future existence will be wholly determined by the habits and principles which we carry into it. The circumstances which in this life prevent vice, sin, wrong-doing, from inflicting pain, will not operate hereafter. There the evil mind will be exposed to its own terrible agency, and nothing, nothing will interfere between the transgressor and his own awakened conscience. I ask you to pause and weigh this distinction between the present and future. In the present life, we have, as I have said, the means of escape, amusing, and forgetting ourselves. Once, in the course of every daily revolution of the sun, we all of us find refuge, and many a long refuge, in sleep; and he who has lived without God, and in violation of his duty, hears not, for hours, a whisper of the monitor within. But sleep is

a function of our present animal frame, and let not the transgressor anticipate this boon in the world of retribution before him. It may be, and he has reason to fear, that in that state repose will not weigh down his eyelids, that conscience will not slumber there, that night and day the same reproaching voice is to cry within, that unrepented sin will fasten with unrelaxing grasp on the ever-waking soul. What an immense change in condition would the removal of this single alleviation of suffering produce?

"Again; in the present state how many pleasant sights, scenes, voices, motions, draw us from ourselves; and he who has done wrong, how easily may he forget it, perhaps mock at it, under the bright light of this sun, on this fair earth, at the table of luxury, and amidst cheerful associates. In the state of retribution, he who has abused the present state, will find no such means of escaping the wages of sin. The precise mode in which such a man is to exist hereafter, I know not. But I know, that it will offer nothing to amuse him, to dissipate thought, to turn him away from himself; nothing to which he can fly for refuge from the inward penalties of transgression.

"In the present life, I have said, the outward creation, by its interesting objects, draws the evil man from himself. It seems to me probable, that, in the future, the whole creation will, through sin, be turned into a source of suffering, and will perpetually throw back the evil mind on its own transgressions. I can briefly state the reflections which lead to this anticipation. The Scriptures strongly imply, if not positively teach, that in the future life we shall exist in connexion with some material frame; and the doctrine is sustained by reason; for it can hardly be thought, that in a creation which is marked by gradual change and progress, we should

make at once the mighty transition from our present into a purely spiritual or unembodied existence. Now in the present state we find, that the mind has an immense power over the body, and, when diseased, often communicates disease to its sympathizing companion. I believe, that, in the future state, the mind will have this power of conforming its outward frame to itself, incomparably more than here. We must never forget, that, in that world, mind or character is to exert an all-powerful sway; and accordingly, it is rational to believe, that the corrupt and deformed mind, which wants moral goodness or a spirit of concord with God and the universe, will create for itself, as its fit dwelling, a deformed body, which will also want concord or harmony with all things around it. Suppose this to exist, and the whole creation which now amuses, may become an instrument of suffering, fixing the soul with a more harrowing consciousness on itself. You know that even now, in consequence of certain derangements of the nervous system, the beautiful light gives acute pain, and sounds, which once delighted us, become shrill and distressing. How often this excessive irritableness of the body has its original in moral disorders, perhaps few of us suspect. I apprehend, indeed, that we should be all amazed, were we to learn to what extent the body is continually incapacitated for enjoyment, and made susceptible of suffering, by sins of the heart and life. That delicate part of our organization, on which sensibility, pain, and pleasure depend, is, I believe, peculiarly alive to the touch of moral evil. How easily, then, may the mind hereafter frame the future body according to itself, so that, in proportion to its vice, it will receive, through its organs and senses, impressions of gloom, which it will feel to be the natural productions of its own depravity, and which will in this way give a terrible energy to conscience! For myself, I see no need of a local hell

for the sinner after death. When I reflect, how, in the present world, a guilty mind has power to deform the countenance, to undermine health, to poison pleasure, to darken the fairest scenes of nature, to turn prosperity into a curse, I can easily understand how, in the world to come, sin, working without obstruction according to its own nature, should spread the gloom of a dungeon over the whole creation, and, wherever it goes, should turn the universe into a hell.

"In these remarks I presume not to be the prophet of the future world. I only wish you to feel how terribly sin is hereafter to work its own misery, and how false and dangerous it is to argue from your present power of escaping its consequences, that you may escape them in the life to come. Let each of us be assured, that by abusing this world, we shall not earn a better. The Scriptures announce a state of more exact and rigorous retribution than the present. Let this truth sink into our hearts. It shows us, what I have aimed to establish, that to do wrong is to incur the greatest of calamities, that sin is the chief of evils. May I not say, that nothing else deserves the name? No other evil will follow us beyond the grave. Poverty, disease, the world's scorn, the pain of bereaved affection, these cease at the grave. The purified spirit lays down there every burden. One and only one evil can be carried from this world to the next, and that is, the evil within us, moral evil, guilt, crime, ungoverned passion, the depraved mind, the memory of a wasted or ill-spent life, the character which has grown up under neglect of God's voice in the soul and in his word. This, this will go with us, to stamp itself on our future frames, to darken our future being, to separate us like an impassable gulf from our Creator and from pure and happy beings, to be as a consuming fire and an undying worm."

THE END.

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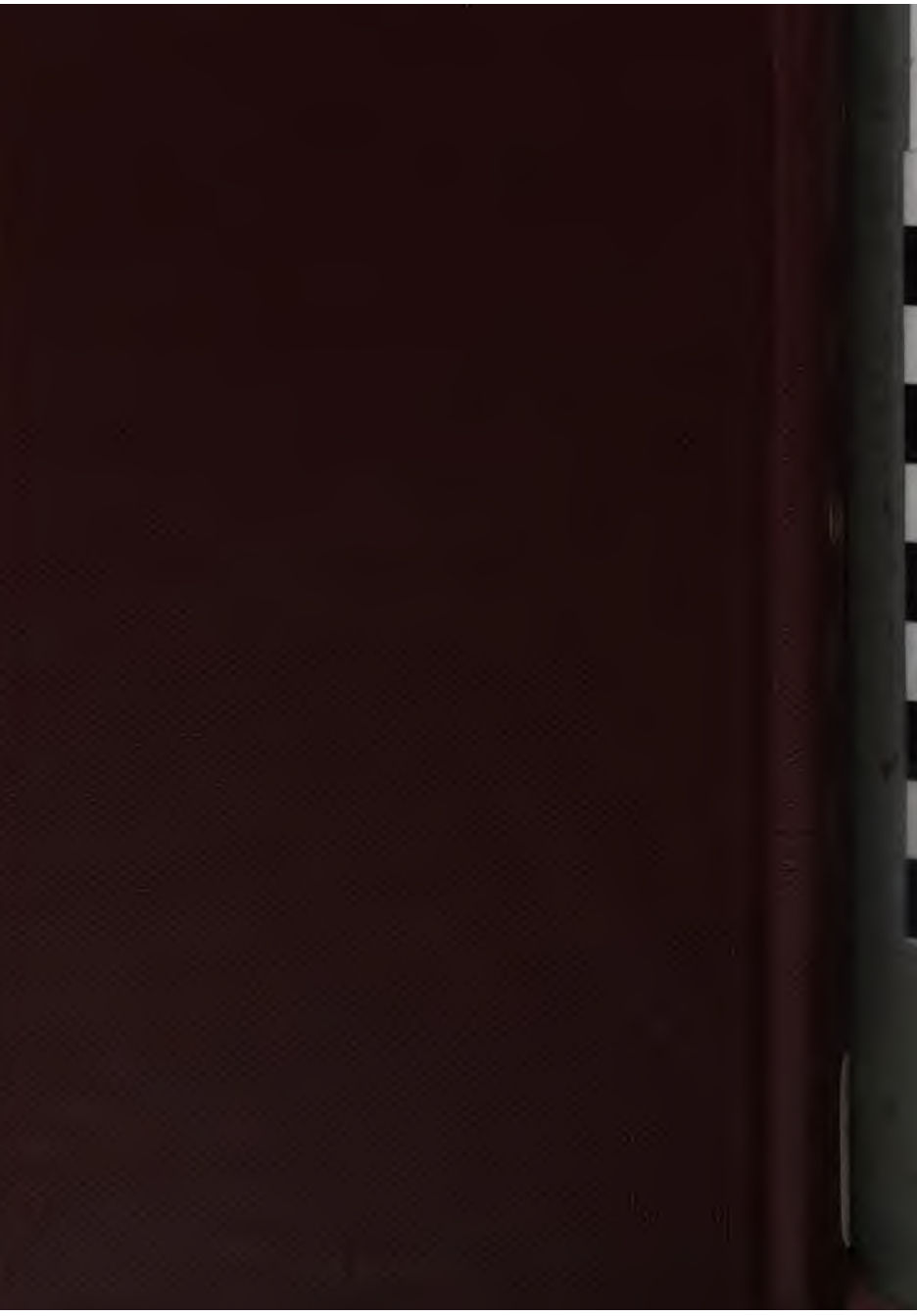
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